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FROM THE AUTHOR

I have checked and compared the facts presented by all the sources available to me.

But I cannot vouch for the accuracy of the dialogues.

I not there. I am not writing about what the participants of events in a particular situation said, but only about what I think they might have said. I do not assert, I do not insist.

If you don't believe me, take it as a joke.

P R O L O G

Instead of a tablecloth - the holy newspaper "Pravda". On the newspaper - three cut glasses, melted cheese, pickles with pimples, a fragrant onion, a slice of bread, a piece of sausage, a bottle with a house on the label and the inscription "Stolichnaya". Around the newspaper are three men in the same position as in Perov's painting "Hunters in the wilderness." Only instead of yellow grass - foam mattresses on the concrete floor of the assembly shop, and behind their backs instead of the autumn forest and endless expanses - a four-axle railway platform of special design, on it - a bomb with a diameter of two meters and length of eight.

Eight meters - that's if you don't count the fuses, two sharp steel pins extending forward about a meter and a half each. The name of this thing is simply "Product 602". It was assembled on a railroad platform at once. And to make the platform in a convenient place for assembly, we had to break out a wall, hollow out the floor and lay the rails right into the assembly shop.

The Product weighs 26,413 kilograms.

The product is to be dropped from a Tu-95V airplane.

In order for the plane to escape the explosion at least a hundred kilometers away, this bomb will descend on a parachute that weighs 813 kilograms. The parachute dome is 1,600 square meters. That's 27 tons with the parachute. That's a lot.

If the parachute does not open or opens with an overlap, a special mechanism in the bomb will not allow it to burst before the time. But the crew of the carrier aircraft does not particularly believe in the reliability of this mechanism.

And all other devices must work. It is for the coming success and spilled brotherly on three flavored tart liquid. The bomb is a three-phase bomb. At a given height - and this is no less than four kilometers - will trigger the first cascade with a capacity of one and a half million tons of TNT. This explosion will trigger the second cascade of 5 million tons, and it in turn will be the detonator for the third, ten times more powerful phase. It should be a beautiful explosion. The total capacity is somewhere in the neighborhood of 55-57 million tons. You can't be sure of the accuracy at this capacity. It could be 30-40 million tons, but it could go over 70. But if we put our hand on our heart, let's admit at least to ourselves: we not the same damn, 30 or 70? After all, it is in any case several thousand times more than in Hiroshima.

But that's not all. The highlight is that Soviet scientists have finally found a way to create a charge whose power is not limited by anything. Nothing at all. In exactly the same case with a length of only eight meters, you can squeeze in a charge of 100 million tons, or even a thousand! A thousand million tons! And blow the Earth to hell! It's great, isn't it? Blow it up!

So the creators, having completed the assembly and tightened the last screw, were drinking at that moment for a reason.

The men had a drink and thought about what to call their creation. "Product 602" is fine. It will remain so in all documents. But it scratches the Russian ear too much. We need romance!

— Bomb Czar!

— It's no good.

— Why?

— They'll laugh. There is a Tsar Cannon in the Kremlin, almost a meter in caliber, weighing 40 tons. It was supposed to fire stone cannonballs weighing a ton. But did that cannon ever fire? Next to it is the Tsar Bell - 200 tons. It never rang. In 1915, Lebedenko's Tsar-Tank was created. It couldn't move.
Do we really want to be in the same row?

— The first Soviet atomic bomb was named Tatiana. Why not give us a name too?

— Like what?

— I don't care if it's Ivan!

— Wrong again!

— Why is that?

— In Russian fairy tales, Ivan is always a fool. We'll call him Ivan, but everyone who has to deal with the bomb will immediately rename him Ivan the Fool.

— That's right.

— I know, bros!

— Go ahead.

— Nikita Khrushchev promised to show America Kuzkin's mother. And what could he show but his wiry, knotted fist? Now he can! Here she is, the beauty! Here she is, my dear! Here she is, in all her dazzling splendor and grandeur - "Kuzkin's mother"!

G L A V A 1.

1

The diesel locomotive somehow very carefully pressed its buffers against the buffers of the special platform. The coupling locks clanked. Chief Designer Yuliy Borisovich Khariton sighed deeply, touched the polished side of the fat lady with his hand one last time: don't let her down, my dear, don't let her down, my dear. And stabbed: but he is her, his favorite, seeing her off to her last journey. And, turning away, not looking at her, he waved in his heart to the driver: bring her out! The diesel locomotive smoothly, as if reluctantly, pulled the platform, took it out of the shop and stopped. In the moonlight the beauty shone with that emerald-silver cast that lies across the Dnieper on a clear night. If one did not know that a bomb had been taken out on the platform, one might well think that it was not a bomb at all, but an elegant little submarine for saboteurs: so pretty, so beautiful, like a frozen drop. But there are no strangers here. No strangers come here. Only our own. And everyone here knows it's not a boat at all, but something else. Everyone here knows that this eight-meter "drop" contains a power that no one has ever possessed before.

Heavy-duty bombs are supposed to be removed from assembly shops only at night. And on those nights, everyone who is not directly involved in the shipment of the product is supposed to sleep. But who will sleep on such a night?

Only those who are directly involved in the final preparations should be near the assembly hall. The rest of us don't belong here. They're not here. They're just beyond the windows of the shops and laboratories. Every window that overlooks the assembly shop floor is covered with bespectacled men in white coats. Who can resist the temptation to look at his creation. At least from afar. At least with the corner of his eye. Everyone contributed a little bit of his soul to the creation of the beauty. But few saw her in her finished form. And now a diesel locomotive came out of the shop, pulled the platform with the shining "drop", and a triumphant cry went through the corridors, offices and halls: ah, how beautiful it is!

How will they transport the drop? Cover it with a tarp? Not at all. First, it'll be secured so it won't move. And fence with steel striped black and orange trusses, firmly screwed one to the other, building a strong frame of them. Even if there is an accident and the "drop" tumbles together with the wagon, the frame will save it from bruises and bruises.

When traveling across the country, the platform with a "drop" will look like an ordinary mail car without windows, moderately grubby, moderately wrinkled, with all the appropriate inscriptions on the sides. And for the time of assembly of the product, the roof and walls of the car were removed. After the assembly was completed, a mighty crane returned the walls and roof to where they should be, covering the "drop" as if it were a big iron box.

But that's not all. A "drop" of tenderness requires special care. A microclimate is created in her cozy carriage - look, my pet, don't get cold. The nights are cold. October has already come.

The very comrades who were supposed to look at the wagon with a scrutinizing eye, nodded: everything was in order, the wagon was just like a wagon. Nobody will pay attention to this carriage. Now the locomotive will take the mail wagon to the spare tracks. Here they will form a train: a diesel locomotive, a guard car, a technical personnel car, a main car with cargo, a car with supporting equipment and one more car of medical equipment.

They'll change drivers at the same dead end. The ones who saw the bomb are the most trusted. They work here, they live here; they and their children will stay here forever. And the new team of drivers has no idea what luck they will have: the cars are just cars, all green, all the same.

In brackets it should be noted that the guards do not need to know what they are guarding. The guards only need to remember the article of the "Statute of guard duty": to guard vigilantly and defend steadfastly. The rest is none of their dog's business.

The destination of the echelon is the city of Gorky. This is the final station. The first to go will be an echelon of a locomotive and a dozen freight cars. It will be followed by the main train, the one carrying the "drop". The drivers of the main train are ordered to stay close to the one going ahead, not letting out of sight the red light on the last car. Behind - another echelon, also at a visible distance. So he followed it all the way to Gorky. True, it did not press on.

We reached Gorky without any adventures. Only the drivers noticed a strange thing: there was not a single oncoming train. What was that nonsense? All traffic up to Gorky seemed to have stopped. Miracles.

In Gorky is the end of the road.

But this was only announced to the drivers and guards, thanking them for their hard work. In Gorky all three locomotives of all three trains together with the drivers and all the guards were replaced. At the same time - and all the documentation for all three echelons. According to the documents, it looked like they had come from Tashkent.

The next stage is from Gorky to Kirov. Now on this section all train traffic in both directions has been stopped. Now the whole line was guarded by troops and militia. Now all railroad crossings were blocked on this track. And again - a buffer train in front, followed by the main train, followed by another buffer train. So that no one would accidentally crash into the one carrying the delicate cargo.

In Kirov, the drivers and guards will be changed once again. At the same time they will change train numbers and all documentation. Only some big bosses in the railroad department will know about the passage of three trains: especially dangerous detainees were carried... from Bryansk.

After that - an order: clear all routes to Kotlas! Guard the line! Close the crossings! Report to

Kotlas, that special trains with prisoners from Yerevan are coming. Prisoners should not sunbathe in the south. They belong in the north!

All the way to Vorkuta.

At each new station - new documents. If someone wanted to reconstruct the route traveled on the basis of the papers, he could not succeed. And to calculate the starting point of the route is impossible in principle. Because it does not exist. The settlement, where this "drop" was developed and collected, is removed from the administrative subordination of local authorities and excluded from all records. It does not exist either on maps or in documents.

And it was decided to blow up "Kuzkin's Mother" at the Moscow-700 site. Don't think it's in Moscow or nearby. No. Moscow-700 is a nuclear test site on Novaya Zemlya.

2

On the very day, October 17, 1961, when the "drop" weighing 26 tons was taken out of the assembly shop, the First Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, Chairman of the USSR Council of Ministers, Comrade Nikita Khrushchev, from the rostrum of the XXII Congress of the CPSU, said:

— I would like to say that we are very successfully testing new nuclear weapons. We will soon complete these tests. Obviously, at the end of October. Finally, we will probably detonate a hydrogen bomb with a capacity of 50 million tons of TNT. (Applause). We said we had a bomb of 100 million tons of TNT. And that's correct. But we not detonate such a bomb, because if we detonate it even in the remotest places, we can blow out our windows even then. (Burst of applause). So we will refrain from exploding this bomb for the time being. But by detonating the 50-millionth bomb, we will thereby test the device for the 100-millionth bomb. However, as said before, God willing, we will never have to explode these bombs over any territory. This is the biggest dream of our lives! (Rousing applause).

3

The XXII Congress of the CPSU discussed a new, now the Third Program of the Communist Party. The

first, pre-revolutionary program: seize power!

The program was fulfilled, they took power. That is why in 1919 we adopted the Second Program: to build socialism!

Socialism was built. What is socialism? Marx's answer is simple: the elimination of private property. Property has been abolished. What next? Next - the Third Program: to build communism!

The third program of the Party was published on July 31, 1961 in all central newspapers. The Party program was discussed by all the people: in the workshops and on the farms, in the slaughterhouses and in the field mills, in scientific institutions and military units, on the great construction sites and in the distant mountain auls. It was the most magnificent program of action that mankind had ever known: to build the first phase of communism by 1970, to build the first phase of communism by 1980.
— total communism!

There were many wise precepts in that program:

• To surpass many times the industrial output of the United States.

• To ensure the highest standard of living in the Soviet Union compared to any country of capitalism.

• Each family gets a free apartment, the use of housing is free of charge.

• Electricity, water, gas, heating - free of charge.

• Free public transportation.

• Free clothing and food for schoolchildren. (True, this item was contained as early as in the 1919 program, but it has not yet been implemented).

• Free catering at the production facility.

• A dramatic increase in labor productivity with a simultaneous dramatic reduction in the work day and work week.

• Sanatoriums, resorts, vacation homes, tourist bases - free of charge.

• Sharp improvement of medical care for workers. It is clear that there can be no paid medicine. All medicines are free of charge.

• Kindergartens, nurseries, gyms, swimming pools, stadiums - free of charge.

• Introduce communist morality to the masses: move to a system of stores without clerks,

public transportation - no conductors.

By 1980, it was envisioned that the state and all its functions would gradually die out, that the transition would be to public self-government, and that the great principle would be realized: EACH PEOPLE SHALL BE EQUALIZED EACH PEOPLE SHALL BE EQUALIZED.

The program ended with a powerful slogan: "THE PARTY HIGHLY PROVOKES: THE PRESENT GENERATION OF SOVIET PEOPLE WILL LIVE UNDER COMMUNISM.

And everything would have been fine, but external circumstances prevented us from reaching the shining heights. If life in our country becomes so beautiful, if one can work as much as one wants and get as much as one wants, if everything is free, of excellent quality and in inexhaustible quantities, then the oppressed proletarians of all capitalist countries will want such a life. And they will rise up. And the bourgeois cannot allow this. Therefore, they will inevitably interfere with us, they will put rails in our wheels, they will plant in us all the most base things, they will deceive and fool our people, they will encourage in us immorality, insolence and boorishness, lies and deceit, drug addiction and drunkenness, theft, prostitution, debauchery and crime. But they cannot limit themselves to this. For the sake of preserving their way of life, they will be forced to destroy us, so that we do not show the proletarians of the whole world, by our fine example, a great example of how people who have thrown off the chains of capitalist slavery can live. The bourgeoisie must inevitably seek to overthrow the power of the workers and peasants in our country, or even to destroy us all.

Therefore we are forced to defend ourselves. The Communist Party and its Leninist Central Committee, headed by the faithful Leninist Comrade Khrushchev, clearly understood that for the victory of communism in the Soviet Union it was necessary to create external conditions, that is, to make sure that the capitalists did not interfere with us. And they will not be able to interfere only when they are not on this planet at all. It's a simple and understandable idea. But every good idea must be supported by deeds.

That is why two delegates to the XXII Congress of the CPSU, Slavsky and Moskalenko, secretly left the meeting room. During the break, Nikita Khrushchev shook hands with them in the corridor, where there were no outsiders, and wished them success.

A government Il-18 was waiting for Slavsky and Moskalenko at Moscow's Central Airfield. The course was to the north.

Moskalenko - Marshal of the Soviet Union, Commander-in-Chief of the Strategic Missile Forces. Slavskiy - Minister of Medium Machine Building.

And what is this Ministry of Medium Machine Building of the USSR?

Let me explain. Back during World War II, Comrade Stalin said: we must solve Problem No. 1. , the Main Directorate for Problem No. 1 was created. But such a name, even if top secret, involuntarily led to the question: what is this - Problem No. 1? That is why soon this organization was named differently: the 1st Main Directorate under the USSR Council of Ministers. We agree, the name became less provocative. But if you think about it, the name could not have been changed, because very few people knew about the existence of such an organization.

Problem No. 1 inevitably attracted Problem No. 2. Therefore, the General Directorate for Problem No. 2 was established No. 2, which was soon renamed the 2nd Main Directorate under the USSR Council of Ministers.

The 1st Main Directorate soon grew into the Ministry of Medium Machine Building, the 2nd Main Directorate over the years turned into the Ministry of General Machine Building.

Ministry of Medium Engineering - nuclear industry, production of nuclear weapons. Ministry of General Engineering -

production of missiles for delivery of these weapons.

4

Privolzhskaya office of Glavgosstroy, KB-11, Stroyupravlenie 880 NKVD, Kremlev city, Yasnogorsk, Arzamas-16, Arzamas-75, Gorky-130, Laboratory No. 2 of the USSR Academy of Sciences, Plant 550, Object 550, Base 112 - all these are names of the same institution, the same place. The same place where nuclear charges are developed and made. The most powerful in the world.

The train left, flashed the red lights of the end car, disappeared into the gloom.

And people don't sleep. And nobody's working in the morning. What the hell kind of work. People are wandering the halls. They all have one thing on their minds: just as long as she kills! And a slight annoyance: why Nikita Sergeevich announced at the congress about the tests? It would be much easier to wait until the beauty is brought to the destination, checked again and blown up. If it works, hurray! If it doesn't work, no one will know about it. It might not. No one in the world has ever created or blown up anything like this. There's a good chance it won't work. That will be a shame: Nikita announced about 50 million tons, and it will take and show much less. And mathematical calculations indicate that the central idea of the entire design is inherently flawed. There have been suggestions to go the other way. And if it doesn't work? Oh, if only it did!

Academician Hariton Yuliy Borisych locked himself in his office, frozen by the phone. And the waiting time was no less than ten days: until they deliver it, and until they check it again.... If only she had killed him. If only...

And the commander of the long-range strategic bomber Tu-95V Major Durnovtsev Andrey Egorovich quite differently on things looks at things: just as long as it did not crash!

No, she, of course, let her rumble, but only after she falls off the carrier and allows the plane to go at least a hundred kilometers. And before that: ah, how not to crash! One consolation: if rumbles, it will be an instant disappearance of both the airplane and its crew, no time to blink. So it's not scary. Or rather, scary, but not very much. Tu-95B - a special modification of the strategic bomber. White it all, like a steamship. White objects best reflect light radiation. Another thing that distinguishes this bomber from the same type of bomber that the cockpit is protected from the inside of the plates of a special material, which is called foam lead. It is lightweight and attenuates penetrating radiation. The miraculous properties of lead foam are not particularly believable. The crew jokes:

If you want to be a father,

wrap lead around the end.

But radiation protection is not the main problem for the country's leadership. If the guys get enough doses, no problem. We'll pay the price. They'll move on. But how to throw the bomb? Together with the parachute - 27 tons. How to make a bomb holder for such a load? But if it is made, there is another problem: the exorbitant weight is concentrated in one point. This creates incredible loads on the airplane's hull.
The load has to be distributed. That's why one holder isn't enough. Nor two. At least three. But then the problems multiply: the navigator pressed the release button, the locks on two holders worked simultaneously, and on the third lock for a fraction of a second delayed. In this case, the bomb went down, and one lock for a moment held the load ... but the bomb would tear that carrier off, along with the beam that held the cargo, along with pieces of the power frame and the plating. And the strategic bomber will fly to the ground with the bomb.

At best, a momentary delay can cause the hull to deform. And that, no matter how you turn it, is still death. But if the jerk does not damage the hull, the airplane may still shake so much from the slightest delay on one lock that after that it will be necessary to fly only downwards.

The problem of simultaneous opening of three locks has been solved. In the tests, all three worked at the same time. How will it work with a combat item?

A special hangar was erected at Olenya airfield for pre-launch storage and last check of Product 602. The "drop" was unloaded from the car by a huge crane onto a forty-ton MAZ 5208 trailer. The Soviet Army used such trailers to transport T-54 tanks. A concrete pit with a steel cover was built in advance at parking lot No. 41. There was even a term in strategic aviation - to stand on the pit. This is when the bomber is in full readiness, and under its belly is a concrete pit with a bomb, which at any moment can be suspended. A special pit was prepared for "Kuzkina's Mother", and the aunt was a large one.
The pit's not for storage. It's just that you can't get it under the carrier's belly from the pit.

Picked it up, hooked it up. After that Tu-95V turned on the start. Followed by the same white Tu-16. His task - to remove the parameters of the explosion. Another plane will rise a little later. Delegates of the XXII Congress of the CPSU Slavsky and Moskalenko from his board will observe the picture from the outside.

All other civilian and military airplanes and helicopters in the vast expanses of the north did not even warm up their engines today. Everyone is grounded today. Understandably, no reason given.

5

Time from takeoff to jettison - 2 hours 3 minutes. Navigator Captain Kleshch Ivan Nikiforovich pressed the button. Bomb holders, created by the creative genius of Soviet designers, worked at once. "Droplet" snapped off three locks and fell out of the belly of the carrier. The airplane did not shake, but tossed and rocked. It rocked the way it only rocks once in a lifetime.

From the cockpit of the tail gunner joyful shout: opened!

The jubilant exhalation of the entire crew was his answer. Now - engines on full power and, accelerating with a slight decline - away from this dead place.

Against the matte haze, a huge dome opened with an orange flower, like a pustule of syphilis on the white body of a beautiful lady. The bomb is heading for the ground at 360 meters per minute. In three minutes, a little over a kilometer. But that's in the final stretch. The bomb goes off at an altitude of 4,500 feet. You'd the plane would have 15 minutes to get away. But it doesn't. For the first few seconds, the droplet flies without a parachute. Then it takes a few seconds for the parachute to open. And our "droplet" for these seconds has already had time to fly and speed up. As long as the parachute can cancel this speed, to the height of detonation will be very little .... Only three minutes. 188 seconds to be exact.

6

The red telephone on the desk of the chief designer of KB-11 suddenly rang like an alarm clock, that hideous ringing that brings us back from a magical dream to the vile everyday life.

- Connection lost," a calm voice reported.

7

All the carrier portholes, all the glazing of the cabins, everything that can transmit light, tightly closed. Tu-95V leaves the epicenter blind. The flash struck suddenly, illuminating everything inside. Curtains, of course, they do not let light through. But this is a special kind of glare. No curtains can resist this devilish, otherworldly light, like X-rays.

And it seemed to the commander of the strategic bomber, Major Durnovtsev, that he had split the Earth in two. It rumbled like only a planet that has been split in two can rumble. 70 seconds of light exposure. The shock wave front caught up with the plane at 115 kilometers from the epicenter in 8 minutes and 23 seconds after the drop. The shock wave hit the tail of the bomber the way an accelerating steam locomotive hits an empty car forgotten on the tracks.

Major Durnovtsev clutched the steering wheel, the steering wheel was trembling. The co-pilot pressed the button, opened the curtains. But he himself does not dare to look at the planes and engines: are they intact? Like a wounded soldier is afraid to look down at himself: only his legs were torn off or the whole thing was torn to the chest?

NIKITA SERGEYEVICH KHRUSHCHEV (1894-1971). One of the most terrible executioners in the thousand-year history of Russia. During the Civil War he was a political worker in the 1st Cavalry Army. Further - party worker of district, regional, republican scale. He entered the Industrial Academy, where he studied with Stalin's wife Nadezhda. She drew the attention of her husband to the "faithful Stalinist". From this moment begins the rapid rise of Khrushchev.

In 1932 he became the second secretary of the Moscow City and Regional Party Committee, in 1934 he became the first secretary, that is, the master of Moscow. Khrushchev showed unheard-of cruelty in the struggle against all those who were or could be enemies of Stalin's policy.

Since 1938, Khrushchev has been First Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Ukraine, i.e. dictator of this richest province of the Soviet Union. Since 1939, he has been a member of the Politburo. In Kiev, Khrushchev met Army General Zhukov, who had commanded the troops of the Kiev Special Military District since 1940, and Commissar of State Security 3rd rank Serov, who was chief of the NKVD of Ukraine. During those years, Khrushchev turned his attention to engineer Brezhnev and elevated him.

During the war, Khrushchev was political commissar of the South-Western strategic direction, which included the Southern and South-Western fronts and the Black Sea Fleet. Khrushchev was personally responsible for two of the worst military disasters in world military history: the defeat of Soviet troops in the land of Ukraine in the summer and fall of 1941 and the Kharkov disaster of May 1942. After the war - dictator of Ukraine. Since 1949 - dictator of Moscow.

In 1953 - a participant in the conspiracy and assassination of Stalin. After Stalin's death - First Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party. Participant in the conspiracy against Beria. In 1956 at the XX Congress of the Party declared Stalin a criminal of all times and peoples, blaming all miscalculations and crimes on him.

In 1957, thanks to the support of Marshal Zhukov, Khrushchev defeated and removed Molotov, Malenkov, Kaganovich and Shepilov from power, and then removed Zhukov himself from power. Since 1958, Khrushchev simultaneously held the post of First Secretary of the CPSU Central Committee and Chairman of the Council of Ministers, that is, he was the head of both the Communist Party and the government of the USSR. Hero of the Soviet Union, three times Hero of Socialist Labor.

YULI BORISOVICH KHARITON (1904-1996). Doctor of physical and mathematical sciences (1935), academician of the USSR Academy of Sciences (1953). In 1939-1941 Khariton and Zeldovich carried out the calculation of the chain reaction of uranium fission. From 1946 Khariton was chief designer of nuclear munitions. Three times Hero of Socialist Labor (1949, 1951, 1954), winner of three Stalin (1949, 1951, 1953) and Lenin (1956) prizes. Commander of five orders
Lenin. [33]

G L A V A 2.

1

On October 30, 1961 at 11 hours 32 minutes 13 seconds Moscow time, all radio communication in the Polar region from Arkhangelsk and Murmansk to Chukotka and beyond suddenly broke down. Academician Khariton has a closed connection with Moscow by government telephone, but Moscow's connection with the area of events is lost!

The news traveled through all the corridors and halls of KB-11 at once. We've lost

contact! That means it's gone off after all, sweetheart!

Now we wait to see how many minutes we've been out of contact. Five? Ten? Fifteen? Yuli

Borisovich couldn't stand it any longer, calling Moscow: how was the connection?

The answer is, she's been gone for 24 minutes!

And that's a reason to open bottles! Swing Borisich! Our grandfather was right! And there were skeptics, they didn't believe, they put forward their own variants!

— Hello, Moscow, how's the connection?

— No connection. 33 minutes

out! 33 minutes is a victory.

And Hariton won't put down the red pipe. Today is his birthday. Minister Slavsky is flying in an airplane somewhere in the area of the events, so let his first deputy answer for him.

— So what's the connection?

— 41 minutes!

— And that's all gone?

— And still no!

We didn't prepare the champagne in advance. So as not to be disappointed later. Now someone with a calloused proletarian hand caught the storekeeper by the collar: open the cellars!

Khariton's office is packed with people. The news slips over their heads into the staircases and corridors.

— So?

— 56 minutes! No!

The growling, barking, quacking, intermittent communication began to recover at 81 minutes. Wow! What a smash!!! What a bang!

2

The connection emerged in some chunks with hissing and crackling.

Minister of Medium Machine Building and Commander-in-Chief of the Strategic Missile Forces sent the first message: "Moscow. Kremlin. To Khrushchev. The tests on Novaya Zemlya were successful.
Homeland's mission is complete. Back to the convention. Slavsky. Moskalenko." Came

on the phone commander Tu-95B: "The task is completed. Major Durnovtsev.

Immediately I received a reply: "To Hero of the Soviet Union Lieutenant Colonel Durnovtsev and the entire crew. Thank you for your service. Khrushchev."

3

A palace - the Kremlin Palace of Congresses - was erected for the XXII Congress of the CPSU. Its construction was not reported. For the delegates of the congress and the whole country - a surprise. Dazzling hall, incredible space. Yes! This place was specially created to accept here the Program of building communism.

On the rostrum of the Congress, scientists and collective farmers, steelworkers and doctors, builders and miners: Approve! Approve! Approve! The Party's plans - into life!

The host interrupted the next speaker:

— Comrades, Comrade Khrushchev has the floor. Khrushchev

went up to the podium. The hall fell silent.

— Comrades... We have reduced the charge. So that it's not 100, but 50 million tons. But our bomb is stubborn. We'll count 50. In fact, it yielded more than that. The test was a success.

Nikita Sergeyevich's voice is hoarse. The excitement is suffocating. He wanted to say something else. Apparently, he had to praise our scientists, designers, engineers, technicians and workers. But it was no longer possible to hear anything. The hall was cheering. The host tried to restore order, to give the floor to the speaker, who was interrupted at half a word, but he waved his hand and announced a break until 7 pm.

4

The result was staggering. The explosion was estimated at 57 million tons. The outbreak was observed in Alaska, Norway, Greenland, and throughout the Soviet North. In an abandoned village 410 kilometers from the epicenter, roofs were blown off, log houses were scattered, stone houses were mowed down. On the island of Dickson 780 kilometers from the explosion flew glass. The explosion was fixed by all seismic stations of the planet Earth on all continents. The sound of the explosion was heard at a distance of 800 kilometers. The mushroom cloud rose into the stratosphere at 67 kilometers. The process of cloud development lasted 40 minutes. The cloud turned out to have a two-tier structure. The diameter of the upper tier was 95 kilometers and the lower tier 70 kilometers. The cloud was visible at a distance of 900 kilometers. The shock wave circled the Earth three times.

A new line has appeared in all Soviet military textbooks. Previously, officers and soldiers were taught that nuclear weapons have four destructive factors: light radiation, penetrating radiation, shock waves, and radioactive contamination of the terrain. Now they finally drew attention to a fifth destructive factor: an electromagnetic pulse that disrupts communications and knocks out electronic equipment.
They used to know about it, but somehow it wasn't seriously considered.

And the newspaper Pravda broke with an article: 50 million tons, 100 million tons - all this is yesterday, we have created more powerful charges.

5

The day after tomorrow is the finale of the historic XXII Congress of the CPSU.

— Comrades, the floor is given to Comrade Nikita Khrushchev, First Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, Chairman of the USSR Council of Ministers. The hall responded with a powerful ovation. Khrushchev said simple and understandable words:

— Our goals are clear, our tasks are defined. Let's get to work, comrades!

Immediately a powerful chorus of the "Internationale," the anthem of all the proletarians of the world, lifted the hall from its seats:

The whole world of violence

we'll tear down to its

foundations and then

We're ours, we'll build a new

world, Who was nothing will

become everything.

Those words have taken on a different meaning. For it is not an empty chime. The homeland of the proletarians of the whole world has for the first time got the opportunity to destroy the whole world of violence and build a new beautiful world!

6

In the evening for the delegates of the Congress - a big concert. Zykina. Magomayev. Ulanova. Troshin. Ensemble "Birch"...

And suddenly there is an unusual number on the stage: "Cosmonauts Training" - two hundred top-class gymnasts show mind-boggling stunts. After all, this is 1961. Only six months ago, our Soviet man was the first to ascend into space,

demonstrating to the whole world the unusually high level of development of science and technology in the Soviet Union. We will continue to be the flagship of development for the whole world. The Moon, Venus, Mars... are next in line. Our footprints will remain on the dusty paths of distant planets!

Here behind the gymnasts - kupletista Nechayev and Rudakov. People's favorites. They accompany themselves. They have a simple melody, which is adored by the country. They wrote to them: we do not mind at all that you have the same motive.

They always performed four-line couplets. Nechayev spoke the first two neutral lines, and Rudakov gave a punchy ending.

The hall is waiting for them to appear. No concert in the Kremlin is complete without them. Here they are! Already from their mere appearance there is a cheerful excitement: they are about to take the piss! They sang about drunks and brakodelovs, about bureaucrats and traffic violators. And here is the finale.

Nechayev:

Gentlemen should

consider that we

missiles.

Rudakov:

A hundred million tons

of TNT to give them

heart attack.

The hall laughed raucously. The hall applauded frantically.

7

Meanwhile, the world was sliding like an ice slide, slowly at first, but then faster and faster, toward World War III.

Not much time would pass and Comrade Khrushchev would decide to deploy on the island of Cuba the 51st Missile Division and the combat units that would cover these missiles.

The Soviet Union was the first to launch an artificial satellite, the first to deliver a pennant bearing the Coat of Arms of the Soviet Union to the Moon, the first to fly around the Moon and photograph its back side, and the first to launch a man into space. We had such missiles and nuclear charges that no one else in the world had. Why take the rockets to Cuba? Let them stand in Siberia, on our land. Why take missiles to Cuba when you can shoot at America from our territory?

So the question is: WHY are there rockets on the Cube?

To understand this, we absolutely have to go back a bit and take a little trip back to Walpurgis Night 1960.

YEFIM PAVLOVICH SLAVSKY (1898-1991). Commissar in the cavalry brigade of the 1st Cavalry Army. After the Civil War graduated from the Moscow Institute of Nonferrous Metals and Gold. In 1941 - director of the Dneprovsky aluminum plant in Zaporozhye, for the evacuation of which he received his first Order of Lenin. During the war - Director of the aluminum plant in the Urals. Since 1946 - Deputy Head of the Main Department for Problem No. 1. Since 1953 - Minister of Medium Machine Building. Three times Hero of Socialist Labor (1949, 1954, 1962), winner of two Stalin (1949, 1951), Lenin (1980) and State (1984) prizes, holder of ten Orders of Lenin. In April 1986 - the accident at the Chernobyl nuclear power plant. After that Slavsky retired.

G L A V A 3.

1

Walpurgis Night is from April 30 to May 1. It is the holiday of witches who gather on the impregnable Brocken Mountain around their lord Satan and hold a sabbath. And then with the dawn comes the Day of International Solidarity of Workers of the World, a day of review of the fighting forces of the proletariat, readiness for struggle and the World Revolution.

Marshal of the Soviet Union Biryuzov Sergei Semyonovich was awakened by the ringing of a red telephone on May 1, 1960 at 5 hours and 41 minutes.

I don't know how to tell the difference: whether the witches' coven is still finishing at dawn, or whether it has already died down and the festival of solidarity of proletarians of all countries has begun.

In short, the marshal was awakened on a cold, nasty morning at the very division, between the conclusion of one event and the beginning of another. But maybe there was no division at all. Maybe Satan, proletarians and witches were rejoicing at the same time, without disturbing each other. The marshal picked up the receiver, and it calmly, like a soulless automaton, said:

— One, I'm one hundred and eighth. Target.

Since evening, in the room next to the Marshal's bedroom, the adjutants had neatly laid out the ceremonial uniform. You can not hang it, sags under the weight of orders: diamond Marshal's Star, Gold Star of the Hero of the Soviet Union, eleven Soviet orders, not counting foreign, medals. And the orders - gold, silver, platinum. Heavy, in short. Everything is ready for the parade on Red Square.

But the marshal will not be required to wear a parade uniform today. The parade for the Marshal is canceled. At 5 hours 36 minutes an unidentified target at an altitude of 21,300 meters crossed the border of the Soviet Union near the city of Kirovabad in Tajikistan, speed 750-800 km/h, direction - north.

Marshal Biryuzov dressed in half a minute, in the soldier's style, field uniform. He ran downstairs, buttoning buttons as he .

The black ZIS-110 is already at the entrance. The order is strict - if a red telephone comes to life in the Marshal's office or bedroom, an audible signal - a sharp grinding howl - and a light signal - a nasty orange flashing light - are immediately activated in the garage. And, no matter what happens, the driver without any commands immediately turns to the front entrance. And three motorcycles with sidecars immediately roll up to the gates of the mansion.

Empty in Moscow at 5 hours and 43 minutes. All the military equipment for the parade on Red Square rumbled from Khodynka to Gorky Street, Manezh Square and Sverdlov Square at night. And there it froze in anticipation.

The ZIS is flying through Moscow. Motorcycles in front, like pilot fish next to a shark.

Don't think it's a long ride. It's all the way to the first subway station.

Do marshals ride the subway? They

do.

You've never met a marshal in the Moscow subway? I'm not

surprised. There are two reasons.

One: marshals don't ride the subway every day, but only in case of an alert.

The second reason: you have not met marshals in the Moscow subway because Comrade Stalin dug a completely different subway for them back in the thirties. It continued to be dug relentlessly during the war and after it, not only under Stalin, but further on. That other subway is lower than the first one. Don't go there with your hard-earned pennies. They won't let you in. Neither will I.

The escort drivers and motorcyclists do not need to know that they are taking their passengers to a subway station. Nor do they need to know about the existence of a secret subway. They are obliged to take the Commander-in-Chief of the country's air defense forces to an inconspicuous building on the Lenin Hills. There are a lot of inconspicuous buildings in Moscow. The fence is green, no slits. The gate is also green. Behind the fence is a dense garden. Not yet green. The gate opens by itself, letting whoever is needed in. In front of everyone else, the gate is locked tight. If you knock, you can't get through.

The driver of the black car and the motorcyclists turn off their engines in a parking lot strewn with small stones. Here, behind a high fence, in this inconspicuous building, they have a rest room with a TV set, copies of Around the World magazine and Alexander Belyaev's books about the Amphibian Man and the Island of Lost Ships. They'll all be fed here. If necessary, more than once. Here you can also sleep, to finish your dreams, interrupted by anxiety. Who knows how long to wait and where they will have to go in five minutes, in an hour, two or three days. Therefore, both the driver and the escort should be fresh, rested, and ready at the first signal to take their passenger wherever they are ordered.

And the marshal disappeared out the door.

Neither the driver nor the escort is supposed to know what he's doing behind that door. He's not doing anything behind that door. There are guards with machine guns behind that door. Marshal runs down the corridor, not responding to greetings. There's no time. The door dissolves silently in front of him, just like the ones in bank robbery movies: a mass of dull, shiny steel, weighing at least ten tons.

Next - a rapid descent, almost a fall, in the elevator. And a gentle deceleration at the end of the journey in the great depths. Here a train of only two cars awaits him. The subway car is not the kind of car in which workers rush to work in the morning to fulfill five-year plans ahead of schedule, in accordance with their commitments. The car is a windowless office, but with a desk, a chair, and government communications equipment.

— The second one?

— I'm on my way.

— The third?

— I'll be there in four minutes.

— Fourth?

— Almost there.

— Fifth?

— In place.

The second is the first deputy. The third is the chief of staff of the country's air defense. The fourth is the commander of the anti-aircraft missile forces. The fifth is the commander of the country's air defense fighter aviation.

And please do not confuse it with the Air Force. The country's air defense forces have their own fighter aviation, which is armed with special fighters for special tasks.

— Operative, situation.

— Comrade One, the target is still flying. If it does not change direction, the route will run from Afghanistan across the Aral Sea to the Urals and on to Norway.

— I order. Battle alert to the Moscow and Baku air defense districts, the first, second, fourth, sixth, eighth, ninth and twelfth separate air defense armies. All civilian airplanes and air force planes - immediately land at the nearest airfields. Clear the skies.

— I got it. I'm on it.

2

The 4th Separate Air Defense Army was alerted at 5:47 a.m. according to information from the neighboring army, without waiting for an order from above. Two minutes later, the alert signal was also received from Moscow.

The 4th Independent Air Defense Army included two corps, the 5th and 19th, and one division in formation.

The country's 5th Air Defense Corps has four surface-to-air missile brigades, five surface-to-air missile regiments, three fighter aviation regiments, and a radio-technical brigade.

The 19th Air Defense Corps of the country at that time had three anti-aircraft brigades, five anti-aircraft regiments, two fighter aviation regiments and a radio-technical brigade.

Anti-aircraft missile units are armed with S-75 complex, aviation regiments with MiG-19, radio-technical brigades with P-8, P-10, P-30 radars.

Problem number one: the infiltrator can pass by the side and not get into the target zones of anti-aircraft missiles.

Problem number two: at such an altitude the MiG-19 will not reach the intruder.

But there is hope: you can try to make a dash upward, trying to hit the target from below with the fire of automatic cannons. And the cannons on the MiG-19 are excellent.

3

The first appearance of a strange target in the airspace of the Soviet Union was recorded on July 4, 1956, the day of the 180th anniversary of America's independence. An airplane of unidentified type and nationality violated the GDR border, passed over East Germany, over Poland, violated the airspace of the Soviet Union.

The Soviet space in the vicinity of Grodno, and then its route passed over Minsk, Vilnius and Kaliningrad. A total of 132 Soviet fighters were sent to intercept the intruder. Only four of them (three Mig-17s and one Yak-25) were able to visually detect the target, but there was not enough altitude or speed to intercept it.

After that, the ghost appeared again and again. Each time from a different direction. The radar data stumped the Soviet leadership: some object at an unreachable altitude was hovering almost motionless in the stratosphere, or was speeding at 750-800, sometimes 850 km/h.

The question was put to the leading Soviet aviation designers. Mikoyan, Yakovlev, and Tupolev gave a categorical answer: it cannot be. As soon as an unidentified flying object reduces its speed to that of a bird, it must fall. And what kind of flying machine is this, which is carried at such an altitude for five or even six hours? Nonsense. Everything the radar operators say fiction.

It should be added that Soviet radars of the P-8 and P-10 type had great difficulty in detecting and tracking this incomprehensible target. The situation changed with the arrival of more advanced equipment.

On January 13, 1959, the P-30 radar of the Turkestan Air Defense Corps (at that time the only one in the entire corps) detected a target at an altitude of 20,600 meters. A MiG-19 fighter aircraft was brought up to intercept it. The pilot was senior lieutenant N. Shiryaev. The fighter's ceiling was 16,500 meters. But the pilot, having accelerated the machine, rushed upwards, turning speed into altitude. He managed to jump up to 17,500 meters. And a strange picture was revealed. The pilot reported to the ground that he saw an unusually shaped plane above him at an altitude of about 20-21,000 meters.

The Soviet pilot, understandably, could not keep the altitude gained. The fighter, having lost speed to zero, immediately fell back to the heights for which it was born. After landing, the pilot drew the silhouette of the intruder: the body is relatively short, the wingspan is incredible. It was clearly the silhouette of a glider. But gliders cannot fly at such an altitude, nor can they run at such a speed. The pilot's report was transmitted to Moscow.
The commander of the Air Defense Fighter Aviation, twice Hero of the Soviet Union, Colonel-General of Aviation E. Savitsky, arrived immediately from Moscow at the head of a group of experts. Savitsky at the head of a group of experts. There was a serious conversation, more like an interrogation, which lasted five hours. The conclusion was made: the pilot wanted to distinguish himself, his whole story was a fiction.

As time passed, the radar operators continued to report the appearance of targets. The target always appeared at an altitude of 20 to 21 kilometers. And always over such sites as the nuclear test site in the Semipalatinsk region, the Tyura-Tam missile test site, the Sary-Shagan air defense missile test site, the Kapustin Yar missile test site, the Mayak uranium enrichment plant near Sverdlovsk, and the construction of the Plesetsk missile test site.

And one more rule. The target appeared rarely, but for some reason on weekends and on holidays, American or Soviet: July 4, November 7, December 31, February 23.

And so, in the early morning hours of May 1, 1960, she reappeared.

Deep in the bowels of Moscow at the Central Command Post of the country's air defense - a short meeting. The situation became clearer. And there was even some calm. The intruder has been in the airspace of the Soviet Union for more than two hours. It's heading north. With every minute of flight he is getting farther and farther away from the border he crossed. It's getting harder and harder for him to return. Every minute he is approaching the central regions of the country, where the probability of getting into the zone of anti-aircraft missile fire is increasing. It's a huge area. The largest in the world. You can't protect it all with anti-aircraft missiles. The gaps between anti-aircraft missile strike zones are covered by MiG-17 and MiG-19 air defense fighters. But this target is clearly beyond their capabilities.

After the first appearances of the strange intruder in the Soviet skies, an absolutely incredible effort was made to create a fighter-interceptor capable of calming the insolent, no matter at what altitudes they flew.

The great aviation designer Pavel Osipovich Sukhoi created such a fighter. It was called Su-9. It was created not for the Air Force, but specifically for the country's air defense aviation. It was not just a fighter, but a single complex that included the fighter-interceptor itself, the guided missiles it carried, and a ground-guidance station. The Su-9 broke the world altitude record of 28,857 meters while still at the experimental stage. Then there would be world altitude records in horizontal flight and world speed records on 100- and 500-kilometer closed routes. However, there was a high price to pay for these achievements.
The machine turned out to be complicated in production, development, management, operation and repair. The Su-9 had not yet been accepted for service with the country's air defense forces, but there were already rumors about how things would be on airfields: the pilot was wet, the technician was sweaty, and the designer was Sukhoi.

But that's the rumor at the top. And at the lower levels of the airfield they have not yet heard of such a designer.

4

Fate gathered all its anger into one crushing fist and nailed poor Belarusian Pavel Sukhoi with this fist for two decades, knowing neither mercy nor mercy. He started in the design bureau of Tupolev. And quickly rose from the position of a simple engineer to the position of deputy chief designer. In Tupolev's empire Sukhoi had his own , as if an autonomous kingdom. In 1933, Sukhoi created the ANT-25 aircraft, which in 1937 flew to America via the North Pole, breaking the world record of a range of 11,500 kilometers. ANT

— is Andrei Nikolayevich Tupolev.

Sukhoi's airplane, but the glory goes to

Tupolev.

The ANT-25 was not built for the sake of records. It was a prototype of the ultra-long-range bomber DB-1.

Then there was Sukhoi's ANT-37 airplane. It, too, broke records. It too was actually an ultra-long-range bomber.

But Stalin was preparing a war against his nearest neighbor. He did not need ultra-long-range bombers in those years. The DB-1 and DB-2 did not go into large-scale production.

Just before the war, Sukhoi headed his own design bureau and immediately won the competition for the Ivanov single-engine bomber, defeating such formidable rivals as Grigorovich, Neman, and Polikarpov. Sukhoi's airplane turned out to be light, graceful, flying, simple in production, maintenance, repair and control. But the war did not come at all, for which Comrade Stalin was preparing. Sukhoi's airplane was ideally suited for the war according to Stalin's scenarios. But the war went according to Hitler's plans. This situation required a completely different airplane.

And Sukhoi during the war created the Su-6 armored attack aircraft, which had outstanding flight characteristics. In all parameters, the Su-6 surpassed the famous IL-2. Sukhoi received the Stalin Prize of the first degree for the creation of the Su-6. But... the airplane did not go into production. They did not want to break the already established production of the Ilyushin attack aircraft.

Sukhoi creates an even more powerful armored attack aircraft, the Su-8, with heavy armament, heavy armor, total weight of 1,680 kg, and again, outstanding flight characteristics. The Su-8 carried a battery of four 45-mm automatic cannons, ten machine guns, one and a half tons of bombs, and 8 rockets. But this airplane did not go into production either. The engines failed. The designer of airplanes does not make motors himself. This is done by other people in other institutions. The airplane was ready in 1943, but the engines... after the war.

The indomitable, indefatigable Sukhoi creates a whole series of astounding airplanes. But fate always found a reason why they were not put into service. Suddenly, the Sukhoi Design Bureau was closed. As many years ago, he was again appointed Tupolev's deputy.

Fate bent and twisted But it failed to break him. Three years later he was offered to organize an independent design bureau "from scratch".

Sukhoi forms his own firm and creates simultaneously the Su-7 for the Air Force and the Su-9 for air defense fighter aviation.

In 1959, Plant No. 153 in Novosibirsk began production of the first Su-9s. Within a year, one hundred and fifty of them were built. But the entire complex consisting of the Su-9 fighter-interceptor, its missiles and guidance station has not yet been adopted for service. This would happen only on October 15, 1960. The airplane was delivered to some regiments, the missiles were delivered there as well, but the guidance stations were expected soon. Yes, and the missiles arrived, but so far they were not considered combat. The order that they were adopted for service, has not yet been. Therefore, the engineering staff of combat units were not allowed to top secret equipment.

At the very beginning of 1960, a great opportunity to shoot down the invisible man appeared. The target was heading in the direction of the Moscow-400 facility. Don't think that Moscow-400 is somewhere in or near Moscow. Moscow-400 is a nuclear weapons test site near Semipalatinsk.

It happened that far away from these places a pair of Su-9s were practicing missile launches at a test range. The Su-9 pilots were not ordinary pilots, but masters of the highest class, Vladimir Nazarov and Boris Staroverov. There are fighters, and there are missiles on them! One can somehow do without the latest guidance station. However, the distance is huge, to fly to Semipalatinsk and attack kerosene is enough, but how to return? It is clear, there is an airfield near the nuclear test site, but it is top secret, you can't land there without authorization.

And the KGB comrades were vigilant. This is Semipalatinsk after all! That's right, the pilots of the country's air defense are admitted to the secrets of extreme importance, they are entrusted with the most advanced combat equipment. But still, this is Moscow 400. What if they see some secrets! No one is allowed to land there. We must get a security clearance immediately.

The two pilots were cleared almost instantly. Breaking all records. It was a rush job! It took only three hours for the watchful authorities to establish: yes, they were worthy people, they could keep military secrets, let them land, because there was nothing but a tower, hangars and transport planes on the secret airfield!

In the meantime, the unknown intruder had passed over three of the Soviet Union's most important facilities, including the Semipalatinsk test site. And calmly flew back to his destiny across the sea.

They reported to Khrushchev: the intruder flies over strategic objects with impunity, he is allowed, but their own, ten times checked, those who should protect our secrets, are not allowed there for the sake of accidentally preventing information leakage.

Khrushchev was furious. In his frenzy he was terrible. Vigilant comrades flew from their posts, losing their general's epaulettes and stripes as they fell. But the moment was lost. You can't get it back. When will it appear again?

5

The ghost appeared on May 11960.

According to the unwritten law that everything always goes wrong, all Su-9s were at that moment not at all in the areas over which the ghost was gliding. After the last scandal, an order was given: in case of emergency, Su-9 interceptors can use any runways, both of the Soviet Union and all its allies. Restrictions are lifted even from government airfields! But there is not a single interceptor that could be transferred from somewhere to the direction of the intruder's flight right now.

— Eh, we'd like to have Su-9 now. - Marshal Biryuzov sighed.

Suddenly the commander of the Air Defense Air Force, twice Hero of the Soviet Union, Colonel-General of Aviation Savitsky, was alarmed: there is a Su-9!

— Where?

— Near Sverdlovsk, in the 4th Army. At the railroad crossing.

— Pick it up!

6

When God brought order on the ground, aviation was in the air. Therefore, where the airfield begins, order ends.

Three days ago, Capt. Igor Mentyukov in an Su-9 landed at Koltsovo airfield of the 4th Air Defense Army near Sverdlovsk. He wasn't allowed to go any farther because of the weather. He spent the night here. Then it got stuck. The car is top secret, even its name is not supposed to be known to outsiders. It's a young car. It hasn't had any childhood diseases. It's only released into the sky when the weather's very good, like a child who's just learned to .

Immediately after landing, the Su-9 was refueled and locked in the hangar, sealed and guarded.

And a rumor spread around the airfield: a stranger was visiting.

— Who hell is he?

— People are talking, "Yakovlev". Yak-31.

— No. It's an Ilyushin airplane.

— Nonsense. Ilyushin never made fighter planes.

— And now I have!

— Guys, don't argue. It's a MiG. But I'm not telling you which one. It's a secret.

Captain Mentyukov waited for a day, waited for another. And on May 1, he decided to get some sleep. It was a day for anything but the ferrying of the newest interceptor.

But they didn't me sleep. They lifted me up. They told me to take off.

And now a mysterious unknown silver beauty takes . The airfield froze in admiration:

— Well, Yakovlev gives!

— Who the hell is Yakovlev? Tupolev himself switched to interceptors.

7

Aviation Commander of the 4th Separate Air Defense Army, Air Force Major General Yuri Vovk reported to the Central Air Defense Control Center of the country:

— I'm Falcon. Su-9 is up. No weapons on it.

It is understandable. If the missiles had already been adopted for service, they could not be on the airfield where the MiG-19s are based anyway. And there are no cannons on the Su-9.

Moscow accepted the report and gave a short order: ram! Captain

Mentyukov dialed three thousand. And was instructed:

— 732, I'm Falcon, keep dialing, heading east!

What the hell is the east if the Su-9 has to be transferred to the west? Was the plane ordered to be returned to the factory? And why? On a holiday. And "Sokol" is not anyone, but SAM. Why the hell is the flight being directed by the commander of the 4th Air Defense Army?

Mentyukov has gained altitude on the run, and he "Falcon" does not give him rest:

— Take it higher, higher still, higher, I said!

And suddenly:

-732, listen carefully. The target is real. You're going to ram it. Moscow's orders.

The Russian language is great and mighty, true and free. And Captain Mentyukov, disregarding the rules of radio discipline and radio camouflage, masterfully used the knowledge of the inexhaustible depths and riches of the language of the great nation to express his respect to the flight director. How could he, a pilot-instructor of the Center for Combat Application and Retraining of Flight Personnel, know that here in the combat regiment an alarm had been announced, that a real target was walking over the country, that he had been raised not to complete the run, but to intercept it. He doesn't have a helmet or a compensatory suit. You don't need them on an intercept. But the regiment would have found them. They'd have dressed him up for such an occasion. All the more that one hour could not be enough for the offender to get to Sverdlovsk. The pilot would have been dressed for interception and combat.

Falcon replied in silence. What do you say? The man is going to his death. No one has ever made a ram at such an altitude. A pilot without a compensating suit and helmet, finding himself in the void of the stratosphere, simply burst. He'd be blown to bits.

He was brought up for interception without warning. He thought he was on a run.

— 732, drop the tanks!

— Dropped it.

— Go for it! Target's ahead. Engage the scope.

— Turned it on. Can't see a damn thing. Target is jamming.

— 732, the target has begun to reverse.

The offender has a speed advantage! The advantage is that his speed is much slower. The intruder realized he was in a bind, but got out of it by simply turning sideways. The Su-9 interceptor has two speeds of sound. He was blown right past.

— "Falcon, where's the target?

— Turn around. Now to your left and up. Ram!

— Got it. Don't forget your wife and mother.

— 732, got it. Afterburner!

— I've got afterburner! It's interference again. I can't see it. Where is he?

— We lost him, too. You must have missed him again. down. Turn off the afterburner!

— You can't turn it off!

— Turn it off! That's an order!

Captain Mentyukov replied with words that I had long since forgotten. But even if I had remembered them, I would not have been allowed to reproduce them here anyway.

The phrase was long, but its meaning was that there, on the ground, they work the way they should work with the MiG-19. But the Su-9 is a completely different machine.

But on the ground, in the heat of the moment, they completely forgot about it, and did not decipher the interceptor's yelling. But even if they had remembered that it was not MiG-19 but Su-9 that was being guided, the top secret instructions on how to work with the newest fighter-interceptor had not yet been received by the 4th Air Defense Army. They are not needed here yet. That's why the operators work with the Su-9 as experience suggests. That's why the order:

— Turn it off!

Mentyukov turned it off. And down he went.

— "Falcon! Where's the target?

— Behind you! Turn around! Put on the afterburner!

— Turn it the fuck on! I've lost speed. I can't turn it on at this speed! This ain't no MiG!

— 732, boundary wall!

— What the fuck is a wall?

— "The wall," I say! In front of you! Go away!

— What's with the wall?

How could a pilot, who happened to be at a combat airfield by chance, know the meaning of secret signals that operate only here and only at certain times.

— 732, get out! They're working on you.

That's it. "The Wall" is the area of anti-aircraft missile fire. But Captain Mentyukov couldn't be held back. He was suddenly overwhelmed by that feeling with which people calmly go to their death. Now only one desire in him, only one desire - a terrible blow to smash the tail of the intruder. Only that, and nothing else. He picked up speed, turned on the afterburner and went.

He's off the ground:

— You're interfering with my work! Go away! I said go away! You'll never get lost!

Mentyukov! He told them:

— I see him! I'll tear him! I see him! I'll tear

him! And him from the ground:

— Igor! My son! Go away. He's in the zone. We'll take care of him ourselves!

The captain in his heart threw the handle, threw the brand-new interceptor over the left wing on his back, and - plunged down! A missile is coming straight towards him from the bottom and upwards. It's a B-750 of the C-75 complex. It won't be long before American pilots in Vietnam will call this terrible thing a flying telegraph pole.

A flying pole has a lot more speed than an interceptor. But an Interceptor has maneuverability. There's a way to dodge. Down. Just down! The ground's spinning right in front of us. You could hit the ground. But that doesn't bother Captain Mentyukov. He would like to dodge the whistling, rattling telegraph pole.

Five kilometers below - two MiG-19. The lead - Captain Ayvazyan, wingman - Senior Lieutenant Safronov. They were raised in case the intruder leaves the unreachable height. Two MiGs will tear him to shreds and shreds. They have six automatic cannons of monstrous caliber for aviation. They
— same command: "boundary wall"!

They're local. They know what the signal means. Ayvazian's worked as a target for the missileers here many times. They'd aim at him without firing, and he'odge. His anti-missile maneuver is as well practiced as hockey goalie Konovalov's shot on the puck.

Mentyukov is flying face down, nose in the ground. Whistling, thunder. MiG fighters:

— Guys! Go away! We' in the zone!

— We hear you. Let's go.

Every self-respecting country has three elements in its armed forces: army, aviation and navy. This, understandably, does not apply to states that are landlocked and therefore have no navy.

The Soviet Union respected itself more than anyone else, so the Armed Forces of the USSR consisted not of three elements, but five.

1. Strategic Missile Forces (RVSN).

2. Army (Army).

3. National Air Defense Forces ().

4. Air Force (Air Force).

5. Navy (Navy).

Each branch of the Armed Forces had its own General Staff. Over all five branches of the Armed Forces there was the Minister of Defense and the General Staff.

The **Strategic Missile** Forces are the youngest of the five branches of the Armed Forces, the smallest, but the most important. The decision to create the Strategic Missile Forces was undoubtedly correct. These troops do not need to cooperate with anyone. They carry out orders only from the highest leadership of the country. Therefore, the line of command is extremely simple: the supreme leader of the state - the Minister of Defense - the Commander-in-Chief of the Strategic Missile Forces.

In 1960, the Strategic Missile Forces had two missile armies - the 43rd (headquarters in Vinnitsa) and the 50th

(headquarters in Smolensk). The missile armies consisted of divisions. In service at that time were Yangel's 8K63 missile systems. B

1961, Yangel's 8K65 missile system was put into service. On January 1, 1962, the first 8K65 regiment went on combat duty. Subsequently, four more missile armies and several separate missile corps were deployed.

The Ground Forces were second in importance. They consisted of five branches: motorized rifle troops (MSV), tank troops (TV), artillery and missile troops of the Army (A&RV of the Army), air defense of the Army (PVO of the Army), and airborne troops (VDV).

The power of the Army can be judged by a simple fact. In the whole world at that time there were six tank armies. All six were Soviet. By the number of tanks and artillery, the Soviet Army surpassed all the armies of all the countries of the world combined. By the number of tank and motorized rifle divisions the Ground Forces also surpassed all the armies of the world combined. There were 12 airborne divisions in the whole world at that time,

8 of them were Soviet. The ground forces had their own nuclear missile weapons, their own air defense system, and, somewhat later, their own aviation.

The country's **air defense forces** were the third most important after the Strategic Missile Forces and the Army. It consisted of three branches: air defense missile forces (3RV), fighter aviation (IA PVO) and radio-technical troops (RTV).

There were two air defense districts and eight separate armies. Each air defense district had one army and several separate corps.

The Air Force consisted of air armies of front-line aviation, corps of long-range (strategic) aviation, and divisions of military transport aviation.

The Navy ranked last not because it was weak, but because the other components were stronger. The four Soviet fleets and one flotilla had naval aviation, submarines, surface ships, coastal missile and artillery forces, and marines.

The Airborne Troops (VDV) were a separate branch of the armed forces. They were either included in the Army or directly subordinated to the Minister of Defense.

In addition, the Minister of Defense was subordinate to the **Civil Defense Forces** and the **Home Front of the Armed Forces**.

But that was not all. The KGB had **border troops**, the most powerful in the world, with their own tanks, armored personnel carriers, artillery and mortars.

As part of the Ministry of Internal Affairs - **internal troops (VV)** to protect especially important state facilities, as well as prisons and camps. And they include armored personnel carriers, mortars, and artillery.

G L A V A 4.

1

Every year in Moscow the morning after Walpurgis Night, bands rattled, tanks and cannons rumbled. On November 7, 1957, on the occasion of the 40th anniversary of the October Revolution, tactical missiles 3P7 of the "Korshun" complex, operational-tactical missiles 3P2 of the "Owl" , anti-aircraft missiles B-300 of the S-25 complex and B-750 of the S-75 complex appeared on Red Square for the first time.

Then every year Khrushchev surprised the world with new surprises. It came to Yangel's 8K63 strategic missiles.

May 1, 1960. Khrushchev is on the podium of the Mausoleum. To his right are the marshals, to his left are the members of the Politburo, which in those years was called the Presidium of the Central Committee. Khrushchev's advisor appeared behind him suddenly and quietly, like a cat on a stove. And whispered something in the chief's ear. Nikita Sergeyevich smiled. And the Counselor went away just quietly. Again - like a cat on soft legs.

After the military parade, there was a parade of physical culture workers, and after that a million-strong demonstration of workers for many hours. It is not an easy job for the leaders on the podium - five or six or even seven hours of smiling and waving their palms. Their own portraits float past the leaders. And banners and banners. And lots of colors. And happy faces. And an ocean of smiles.

You can't stand for hours. Bladder's not rubber. And no one has thought of putting hoses on the relevant organs of the leaders. So they take turns coming down from the podium to take a break. Behind the Mausoleum there is a pavilion in disguise. Here you can find a toilet and a rest room. You can relax a little, sit or even lie down. There's something to eat. And there's something to drink.

Nikita Sergeevich blinked to the Minister of Defense Marshal of the Soviet Union Malinovsky: Rodion Yaklich, well, for a moment.

They came down. Nikita poured both of them a glass. They drank.

I dare report: the vodka they drink there, behind the Mausoleum, is not the kind we drink. They drink only masterpieces of liquor production. And the appetizers are not at all like those in our refrigerators.

Quack. Snack.

And Marshal Malinovsky keeps looking at Nikitka: his face is too oily, like that of a fox that has eaten chicken. This sly face Malinovsky remembers since the summer of 1941. They fought together. Khrushchev - political commissar of the General Command of the South-Western strategic direction, which included two fronts (Southern and South-Western) and one fleet (Black Sea), and Malinovsky in this direction commanded a corps, then an army, then the Southern Front. In 1942, fate at Stalingrad again brought together. After that, almost two decades know each other. Malinovsky studied Khrushchev's behavior.

Nikita's smile brightened:

— Invisible men are flying over the country.

— They're flying, Nikit Sergeyich.

— Well, while we're standing here on the podium, your boys shot down one of those invisible things today. With the first missile. I know about it, you know about it, Biryuzov knows about it. Keep quiet. Well, one more. You're welcome.

2

The people of the Soviet Union are celebrating. In the capital. In cities and towns. In villages and small hamlets.

There is a holiday in Siberia, in the Crimea, the Caucasus and the Urals. The harmonica is playing. Girls dance. This was the case in the village of Kosulino in the Sverdlovsk region.

Suddenly there's a bang from the woods!

And the show was on. Fireworks under the clouds! That's what it means to care about the people. Not only in the capitals, but here, in the countryside, they began to organize fireworks. It's beautiful. Then it got quiet. And in the sky, an umbrella and a black stick bobbing under it. A parachutist! But nobody saw the plane. A parachutist from the stratosphere! Maybe from outer space?
An alien. Space has gotten so close in the last two years. The first satellite! The first living creature in space - our dog Laika! The Soviet pennant on the Moon! The flight to the Moon! The road to space is open! Soon the Soviet man will fly to the Moon. Then to Mars! To Venus! What a book about Venus they've brought to the stall!
"Land of the Crimson Clouds" is called. The Strugatsky brothers wrote it. Soviet people on Venus! This is a book about the end of the XX century, when, in the midst of the great human conquest of near-solar space, on Venus discovered unusually rich deposits of radioactive ore...

And the parachutist is getting closer. People are running to where the parachutist is carried by the wind.

It was a bad fall. Threw me on my back. I twisted my leg. Good thing I hit the cropland. It's softer. I could have fallen on the rocks. Or worse, those Christmas trees over there. Or a high-voltage line. Picked him up. Shook him off. The dome was extinguished. Everybody's talking. Everybody's smiling. But he doesn't say a word. He's wearing a space helmet, ethereal clothes, good material, shiny, foreign. And on his chest - enemy letters! And he's wearing a parachute. And some strange pistol not on his side, but on his hip, almost at the knee. It's not our way.

Tractor driver Vanya made one last attempt to resolve the conflict peacefully. It could be our man. He came back from outer space. And the letters are foreign, so that cannibals in Africa don't eat him. There's no telling where the wind might take him. And he's got a gun for the same purpose: to shoot at cannibals.

To dispel misunderstanding and distrust, Vanya gestured internationally that it would be nice to have a drink on the occasion of May Day and a successful landing. We have plenty to drink. So welcome.

The parachutist did not understand such simple and clear signals. And then suddenly there came a simple and terrible clarity: it was not ours!

They would have killed him, but it was his helmet that saved him. You could pound on it with a hammer. So a couple of rakes on that helmet was like a baby rattle.

Just in time, the military jumped up in a GAZ-63, drove the people away, and they told him to put his hands on his head! And showed him how. The alien understood. An evil one, but he understands.

Good thing he's not wearing a gun. Just an empty holster.

— I'll shoot them all," the Soviet captain yells. - Who pulled the gun? Give it back! The

alien points his finger at his left wrist: "It would be nice to give back the watch, too.

3

On May 3, 1960, the U.S. government announced that an American plane that was collecting scientific information in the high atmosphere had gone off course and disappeared somewhere in the mountains of Turkey. Minutes before losing contact, the pilot reported that he had a problem with his oxygen device. That same day, NASA officials held a press conference. It was suggested that the plane fell into Lake Van. But another option is not excluded: the pilot lost consciousness due to lack of oxygen, and the plane could have flown in any direction, even to Africa, even to the Indian Ocean.

May 5, Nikita Khrushchev, speaking at a session of the Supreme Soviet, said: no, no, not science smells here, citizens and comrades, and espionage. He flew to us. We shot him down.

And then on May 6, the Americans announced: the pilot was lost.

On May 7, Khrushchev punched him: he was alive, caught, confessed to everything.

4

Chief of the Main Intelligence Directorate of the General Staff (GRU GSH), Army General Serov, to Marshal Biryuzov, Commander-in-Chief of the country's air defense:

— Sergei Semyonich, your boys did a masterful job. Do people really say that the first missile was the first?

— It's true. - The marshal expressed himself in some obscene way, spat and added: - Pure truth. Just not all of it.

5

The 2nd division of the 57th Air Defense Brigade was alerted at the same time as all air defense brigades and regiments of the 4th Separate Air Defense Army. The commander of the division on retraining. Instead of the commander - Chief of Staff Major Voronov Mikhail Romanovich.

It takes seconds to get a division on alert. The degree is the highest. But an hour passes, no target appears. A second passes. Then a third. And I'm sleepy. You're up so early. But the phones are silent.

Suddenly all four of them rang and rumbled at once - from the neighbors, from the corps control room, from the army headquarters, from Moscow: the target is coming at you! To be more precise - near you! On the very edge! If it gets into the zone, kill it! Crush it! Exterminate it! To hell! To your fucking grandmother!

Further unprintable phrases, but all about the same: black wings dare not fly over the Motherland! God damn it.

And the intruder walks along the very edge of the firing zone, seemingly knowing where it is or sensing it. As luck would have it, our fighters are in the air.

Acting commander of the division Major Voronov in the telephone receiver at the control center of the anti-aircraft brigade: yes, take them the hell away, they interfere with work.

From the control center of an anti-aircraft missile brigade to the control center of an air defense corps: get rid of these...! Then something about small insects that are transmitted from one person to another during sexual intercourse.

And suddenly - an intruder in the firing

zone. Major Voronov:

— Target 8,630. Three missiles. Launch.

Lt. Feldblum stabbed his finger on the first button, the second, the third.

— First one out!

Stop. Let's stop. Let's face it, have you ever seen a B-750 anti-aircraft missile come off its guide rail?

No? haven't?

So, it comes off with a jerk, with a roar, a rumble and a scrape. And right before your eyes, it picks up speed. The sound of the departing missile is barking, like a supersonic fighter jet.

— Come on, sweetheart! Oh, it's beautiful!

— The second one!

— The second one didn't come off! Angle of interdiction!

— Three!

— The third one didn't it! Angle of interdiction!

This is what happens in life: at the most inopportune moment, all coincidences merge into a chain. was a once-in-a-lifetime event. The targeting cabin is on a man-made mound. Around it are six launchers. Around each launcher is a ring mound. This is both camouflage from prying eyes and protection from enemy fire. Each launcher has a nearly circular firing pattern. Except for two degrees, when the field of guidance gets a cabin located in the center of the firing position. The first missile is gone, but the second is not. Between the target in the sky and the launcher just so happened to be the guidance cabin. If there had been a launch, the missile, coming off the guide, would have immediately crashed into the command post, blowing it apart with the operators. The designer envisioned such a possibility and completely ruled out. In the event of such a situation, an automatic system is triggered, preventing the launch from taking place.

At that moment the command for the third missile was received, but the airplane moved in space in a few seconds, and then the same situation arose for the third missile: the guidance cabin became an obstacle that canceled the launch.

And on the screen there's a jumble of dots. One would be hard pressed to tell whether the intruder had interfered or whether it was falling pieces of the downed airplane. The dots slightly dispersed and the picture became clear: the first missile continues its flight! It follows from this: lubricated!

Not a problem! The intruder must now fly into the neighbors' zone. And then the order is: Fire! Fire! Fire!

But he was no longer needed. The plane was shot down by the first missile. And it was shot down in a way that no one had ever dreamed of: without damaging the pilot-spy.

The intruder has walked to the very edge of range. Just as it entered, it was on its way out. The missile was closing range. The blast came from behind. The blast tore off the tailplane and ruptured the engine. But the engine saved the pilot, serving as a reliable shield. After the non-contact detonation of the head part, the missile itself continued to fly for a few seconds, and it was visible on the screens, creating the illusion of a miss. So the firing continued. That is why the neighboring villages saw the May Day salute under the clouds.

The truth was that the intruder was shot down by the first missile. But

that's not the whole truth.

The offending airplane passed through the 2nd Division's fire zone at the very edge, but immediately came under multiple layers of fire from several divisions at once. The whole truth was that after the first missile of the 2nd Division, the 3rd Division was firing at the target. It fired all six of its missiles: two series of three. At the same time, the 5th Division joined in. And also fired two series of three. So that's the first missile. and twelve more.

A few days later, the Decree of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR on awarding distinguished officers, sergeants and soldiers was published.

But there were no generals on this list. Marshal Biryuzov, the Commander-in-Chief of the country's air defense forces, was also absent from this list. Although, it would seem, why not award the Commander-in-Chief, who personally led the entire operation from the very beginning? Why not award him, if for the first time in world history

the real intruder is destroyed over our land at a previously unattainable altitude, if the unbreakable power of Soviet defense is demonstrated to the whole world?

Instead of the Marshal on the list of awardees was Senior Lieutenant Sergei Ivanovich Safronov, the wingman of a pair of MiG-19s. He was awarded the Order of the Red Banner. In the decree for some reason - apparently due to an oversight - the word "posthumously" was omitted.

6

The Soviet Union was capable of many things. The Soviet Union could launch the world's first artificial satellite, be the first to send its citizen into space, detonate the world's most powerful thermonuclear bomb, shoot down the first stealth airplane at an almost unreachable altitude with its first missile. But the Soviet Union could not feed itself. The reason for this was the economic system of socialism.

Since my early youth I have been trying to figure out what it is that is socialism. Over the years, I collected more than four hundred definitions. Then I stopped collecting definitions when I realized that there are as many socialisms as there are socialists. And even more. Yesterday Comrade Lenin understood socialism this way, today - differently.

But still, I did find a common idea - a common denominator, so to speak. All socialists preach the same thing in one form or another. Take the program of any socialist party, the materials of any of their congresses, the speech of a fiery revolutionary or the appeals of a progressive trade union, squeeze out the empty words and phrases - and there are many of them - squeeze them well, and in the dry residue you will get the essence: WE WILL WORK LESS AND LESS, WE WILL GET MORE AND MORE.

The main thing is that a person, a group of people, a trade union or a party, implementing this principle, look like fighters for freedom and justice: we are not trying for ourselves, but for the good of the whole workshop, the whole class, the whole country and humanity.

Using this beautiful slogan (understandably, not in its bare and frank form, but surrounded by colorful phrases), you can destroy any, even the most powerful economy. This slogan helps pierce the way to power.
The crowd will always support you: who doesn't want to work less and less and get more and more?

But those who ride on the principles of justice to power will be forced to abandon these principles immediately. For, working less and less, it is impossible to get more and more. The country will collapse. And here is the question: do they themselves realize where they are calling the stupid crowd? Do they themselves realize that they will have to abandon their own calls and predestination?

If they don't get it, they're idiots.

If leaders understand everything, but they lead, drag, drag their people there, then such leaders are deceivers, swindlers, crooks, swindlers, criminals.

And there can be no others among them, only an intermediate layer - stupid criminals.

But if the new social order and its economic system are created by cretins and urks, then the result of their activity can only be stupid and criminal.

And communism is the highest stage of socialism. We will work according to our abilities and receive according to our needs. Simply put, we will work not just less and less, but as much as our soul desires. And to receive not just more and more, but also at the dictates of the soul - as much as you want!

In 1917, power in Russia was seized by people who preached just that: to work according to ability, to receive according to need.

Immediately, having gained power, these fighters for justice and equality abandoned their slogans. They declared: yes, you will have your needs. But not now. First we have to build socialism, and that will take several decades. And after building socialism, we will move on to building communism. This is also a long historical period. In the meantime, we will live as it turns out, closing the borders to those who try to escape, destroying by millions those who do not believe the beautiful promises of a beautiful life in a bright future.

7

It's a big country. The border is secure. It was almost impossible to escape. Beyond the borders were our subject lands: Poland, East Germany, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Romania, Bulgaria. Everything there was almost like ours. But then something bad started to happen. An outrage, frankly speaking. Then there's bloody capitalism. People there lived in a different way. And no matter how many times you explain that everything is very bad there, our unconscious people wanted to live as they do . And this cannot be allowed. Why not? Because if we live like there, then the ruling party will have to answer to the people not only for its victories and achievements, but also for mistakes and crimes, for the lack of sausage and cheese, for kilometer-long queues. In a free country, no one will vote for such a party. And the leaders will remain unemployed.

The most important trouble was that the Soviet Union could not coexist for long next to normal countries, because a planned (i.e., bureaucrat-run) economy cannot compete with the economies of free countries. That is why two stores, one of which is clean and orderly, with affordable prices, polite salesmen, and an abundance of goods, and the other has empty shelves, dirt, cockroaches, rat fights, and a boorish attitude toward the customer, cannot prosper for long.

The owner of the second store faces a dilemma: either declare bankruptcy or let the successful neighbor "red rooster".

That is why North Korea cannot historically coexist with South Korea for a long time, cannot maintain normal relations with it. Koreans there and Koreans here. Same people, same history, same psychology, same abilities. But South Korea is an economic superpower, and North Korea is about justice, a bright tomorrow, and a hungry today. If you open the border, all the people will flee from the north to the south. That's why the border is sealed. That's why anyone in North Korea who says that life is better in South Korea is put in a concentration camp for re-education.

South Korea makes gorgeous, mind-boggling cars, televisions and computers, while North Korea builds missiles and atomic bombs.

This is the situation in which the leaders of the Soviet Union found themselves: resources are abundant, land is as plentiful as you want, and the people are talented. But in the stores there are queues for sausage made from some suspicious products.

And people ask questions: why is it so? Those who asked such questions had to be searched for, found, imprisoned and re-educated.

Comrade Lenin was right: either one or the other will win.

Either the damned bourgeois will seduce and draw all our people into a life like theirs. Or we will strangle them, and then everyone in the world will live way we do. And then there will be nowhere to run. And then there will be no role models to compare and imitate. Then there will be nothing to compare to. Then everyone will know that there is no other life.

The Kremlin leaders did not want to admit that they were bankrupt. The only thing left was to bet on the "red rooster". There were no options. In the very first days and years of the new government's existence, its leaders openly and brazenly declared: "We are stoking the world's fire. They even sang about it in songs. But how to crush the bourgeoisie? Stalin tried, but, by and large, lost. Stalin tore something from Europe, established a happy life there. But Europe of the West resisted. After the failed conclusion of World War II for the Soviet Union, the question arose: what next? Was it to declare bankruptcy? Immediately after Stalin's death, an intensive search for a way out of the impasse began.

In 1954, the Main Intelligence Directorate of the General Staff of the USSR Armed Forces issued the so-called "locomotive" (aka "locomotive") report.

The point was that the locomotive of capitalism - or rather, the locomotive of the capitalist economy - could not be destroyed without the use of nuclear weapons. But is it necessary to break the whole locomotive? 't it be easier to find some part that could stop the movement?

The GRU considered oil to be this detail, this vulnerable design element. It is necessary to seize the main oil deposits on the planet Earth or at least take control of its delivery routes.

The Kremlin leaders recognized this program as reasonable and adopted it as the basis of foreign policy. Its implementation began immediately. From that moment on, the Soviet Union's attention was shifted to Egypt, Syria, and Algeria. There Khrushchev chased guns and tanks, planes, thousands of military advisers and millions of tons of various cargoes. In 1955, Soviet construction workers began laying roads and cutting tunnels in the mountains of Afghanistan. From north to south, of course. To Baluchistan. To the warm seas, to the main oil flows.

In 1956, the British, French and Israeli governments realized what the Soviet Union was arming Egypt for and how it might turn out. Egypt cannot boast of oil reserves. But through its lands lies the Suez Canal, through which oil is shipped to Europe. Cut off the canal - and what will Europe do? Egyptian comrades (on the Kremlin's prompting) tried to block it - it brought the world to the brink of war. But even here Europe resisted.

The Suez crisis of October 1956 can in no way be called a victory for the Soviet Union. The overlap did not go away. It didn't.

What do you do if you 't crush the enemy? You just threaten.

On November 18, 1956, at a reception in Moscow, Nikita Khrushchev told the ambassadors of Western countries, "History is on our side. We will bury you."

That's our diplomatic tone: "We will bury you."

The U-2 was an American high-altitude strategic stealth reconnaissance aircraft that was a hybrid of a glider and a jet fighter. Length - 15 meters, wingspan - 24 meters. In subsequent modifications, length - 19.2 meters, wingspan - 31.4 meters. Maximum speed - 850 km/h.

The aircraft was equipped with unique reconnaissance equipment, including a photo camera capable of capturing in one flight an area of land surface 320 kilometers wide and 3500 kilometers long with incredible resolution for that time.

The airplane could fly both at the speed of a subsonic jet fighter and hover in the stratosphere like a glider with the engine turned off. The airplane's body and wings were coated with a special compound that made it very difficult for air defense equipment to detect the aircraft.

The existence of such an airplane was an absolute secret of the United States of America.

G L A V A 5.

1

In 1959, an American exhibition opened in Moscow. People lined up in queues from the evening, which stretched up and down the streets. Our people were hardened, trained to push in queues. The crowds were waiting for the opening moment for nights on end. And if there was a delay in the morning, our people heroically stormed the entrances, crushing the barriers and dispersing the guards.

People came out of the exhibition hurt, dazed, dumbfounded. There were only two opinions. The first

was that it simply could not be!

Second: and we still have it better!

On June 24, 1959, letting the general into the halls, U.S. Vice President Richard Nixon led Nikita Khrushchev through the halls and showed him the beauties of American life. Nikita was winded, swearing loudly and quietly, proving that it was all a show to hide the rot. Yes, maybe the Soviet Union lacks something, but soon it will be enough. And in terms of quality, ours will still be better than America's! Because in America the system is decaying, and in ours it is progressive.

The further Khrushch walked past American vacuum cleaners, washing machines, TV sets and refrigerators, the angrier he got. Finally, he became so angry that he announced: America will show Kuzkin's mother to America!

It's in our spirit: I can't build a house like yours. So I'll set your house on fire tonight. And I'll smash your face in too! So you don't have to be proud and show off. Motherfucker!

Nikita mentioned someone's mother at that historic moment. And we should remember that we have two expressions about mothers: a translatable one and an untranslatable one. And the Americans have only one, which is quite translatable and quite close to our first one in meaning. We could not translate the untranslatable term at that moment. The famous American understood it differently. There is nothing to be done about it: everyone understands in his own way.

In Russian, a promise to show Kuzkin's mother means a threat.

I don't know who Kuzkin's mother is. There are different interpretations. I am inclined to the following version: in the Pomors, inhabitants of the Russian north, Kuzka is the houseboy behind the stove. Terribly scary. And his mother is even scarier. And a little further south, in the Tver and Yaroslavl forests, Kuzka is the name of a goat and a devil, which in the popular view of the goat is very much like a goat - exactly the same, only on the hind legs running. In short: an upright goat.
It turns out that Kuzkin's mother is a lady revered in certain circles who is closely related to the bloody grandmother.

2

On January 14, 1960, Nikita Khrushchev stated at a session of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR: "Military aviation and the navy have lost their former importance under the modern development of military technology. These types of weapons are not being reduced, but replaced. Military aviation is almost entirely replaced by missile technology. We have now sharply reduced and, apparently, will go to further reduction and even cessation of production of bombers and other obsolete equipment".

But we cannot stand still. Khrushchev warned: "Some states, without hiding, consider themselves our adversaries. They will not stand still. If these states do not have as many missiles as we do, and their missiles are less perfect, they have the opportunity to catch up with the temporary lag, to improve their missile technology and, perhaps, sooner or later will equal us.

The speech implied that we need to continue to be ahead in the number of missiles, and in their quality, to show the damned bourgeois Kuzkina's mother at any moment.

Not four months later, valiant Soviet anti-aircraft gunners shot down an American reconnaissance plane with their first missile on May 1, 1960.

3

May 7, 1960 Nikita Khrushchev has a double holiday. He kept the capture of the American pilot a secret for a reason. Nikita waited for the Americans to start lying. He waited and caught them. He waited and hit them! Isn't it a holiday?

And on the same day, Khrushchev has another victory.

Lenin had his own people in power. But after Lenin's assassination, Stalin, the most loyal Leninist, had to knock all the other Leninists out of leadership positions and replace them with his own people - Stalinists. And Stalin did it. It took him 15 years to do it.

But after Stalin's assassination, Khrushchev, one of the most loyal Stalinists, had to kick all the other Stalinists out of leadership positions and replace them with his own men - Khrushchev's men. It took him seven years to do this.

This process was completed on May 7, 1960. On that day, Khrushchev finally dethroned the last Stalinist falcon, Marshal Voroshilov, from the post of Chairman of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR. And in this place he put his most loyal friend Leonid Brezhnev.

In 1937-1938, Stalin was completing the Great Purification of the country. In Moscow, and then in Ukraine, the purification process was led by Khrushchev. He removed and shot some of them, searched for, found, and raised others to the top, while forming his own team. Ukraine is great, there are many districts, cities, regions in Ukraine, many ministries and departments in the glorious city of Kiev, thousands of people in responsible positions serve the Motherland. But Nikita Khrushchev chose Brezhnev, a simple engineer at the factory, gave him a leading post - he coped, raised higher - coped here too. In two years - from the position of an engineer to the full master of the Dnepropetrovsk region, one of the most powerful industrial areas of the Soviet Union.

During the war, both Brezhnev and Khrushchev himself were political commissars at the front. Khrushchev ended the war as a lieutenant general, Brezhnev as a major general. After the war, Khrushchev is again the master of Ukraine, and Brezhnev
- master of Zaporozhye and Dnepropetrovsk, the most important industrial areas of Ukraine.

Then Stalin made Khrushchev master of Moscow and Brezhnev master of Moldavia. Both of them had many other high posts and positions. Khrushchev dragged Brezhnev to Moscow, after Stalin's death, he returned to the army as commissar - to look after the generals - and again party boss Brezhnev flaunted his golden general's epaulettes, which suited him so well. Further in Brezhnev's service list Kazakhstan and again Moscow. And on May 7, 1960, ousted from the post of Chairman of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of Stalin's Marshal Voroshilov, Khrushchev put on this post Leonid Brezhnev.

Khrushchev is the head of the Communist Party and at the same time the head of the Government. And loyal friend Lenka Brezhnev would now be the head of the legislature, and legally - the head of state. Flexible Voroshilov stamped any decrees and laws that were pleasing to Khrushchev. But it is still better to have only your own people in all positions.

4

Under Stalin and under Khrushchev, May 9 was not considered a holiday. It was an ordinary working day. No parades, celebrations, speeches or salutes on the occasion of the victory over Germany in World War II. In those years everyone understood: there was a war, a lot of people were killed, they reached Berlin, but there was nothing to rejoice about - the problem of Germany remained unsolved. It was after Khrushchev's overthrow that the new leader, Comrade Brezhnev, invented and established such a holiday. And the first two decades after 1945 everything was modest and quiet. Only front-line soldiers after work gathered in the yard on a bench, remembered the past days and battles, where they fought together, sang songs to the accordion and to the front hundred grams.

On May 9, 1960, front-line soldiers gathered at Khrushchev's dacha - the closest circle, those whom Khrushchev had known during the war: Marshal Malinovsky, Minister of Defense of the Soviet Union; Marshal Biryuzov, Commander-in-Chief of the country's Air Defense Forces; Marshal Moskalenko, Commander-in-Chief of the Moscow Military District, Commander-in-Chief of the Strategic Missile Forces, Chief Marshal of Artillery Nedelin, Commander of the Artillery and Missile Forces of the Ground Forces, Chief Marshal of Artillery Varentsov, Chief of the GRU, Army General Serov, and Leonid Brezhnev, who had been Khrushchev's wingman since before the war. Nikita himself put on a front tunic with the epaulettes of a lieutenant-general over a Ukrainian embroidered shirt. Brezhnev also threw on a uniform with general's epaulettes over his white shirt.

Among them there was only one purely civilian, who did not have a uniform with gold epaulettes. His name was Frol Romanich. His surname was Kozlov. He had never served in the army, not even as a private. The country had gone through a terrible war, in which the color of the people was beaten out. In this war Frol Romanich showed the greatest heroism in the deep rear. During the war he was thirty-something. It would be the right time to command an anti-tank battery or a sapper battalion. But he had a much more honorable service as secretary of the party committee of the district. Closer than one thousand kilometers to the areas of combat operations did not come closer. At the same time he managed to finish the war with two combat orders: the Red Star and the Patriotic War of the II degree.

Statute of the Order of the Patriotic War Comrade Stalin composed personally. And wrote in the document, who and for what feats and accomplishments can be awarded this order. Thus, the Order of Patriotic War II degree could be awarded to those who:

• personally destroyed one heavy or medium or two light tanks with artillery fire;

• sneaked into enemy firing positions and destroyed at least one gun, three mortars or three machine guns of the enemy;

• under enemy fire evacuated from the battlefield two tanks that had been hit by the enemy;

• shot down one enemy airplane with his personal weapon; and so on.

Frol Romanich did not burn enemy tanks, did not shoot down airplanes with his personal weapon, did not pull

the tanks under enemy fire. But he did receive an order.

The Order of the Red Star was also given for combat deeds, but not at all for fiery speeches away from the front.

Maybe Comrade Kozlov did something useful on the labor front? Everything can be. However, in this case there were other orders: the Red Banner of Labor, for example. Frol Romanovich, by the way, also had labor orders.

And he didn't just grow up fast. He grew rapidly. And grew to the point that a decade and a half after the war, he became the No. 2 man in the Soviet Union. July 13, 1959, the American magazine "Time" placed a picture of Kozlov on the cover and asked the question: will he not replace Khrushchev? In the Soviet Union, no such question was asked. Everyone who followed the balance of power in the Kremlin understood that Frol Romanovich Kozlov was not only the one who would succeed Khrushchev on the throne, he was the one who had almost succeeded him.

Frol Romanich ruled the country. Officially, he is only No. 2 in the leadership of the Soviet Union. In reality.
- a little more than that. Frol Romanich caught Comrade Khrushchev's inexorable craving for official visits abroad, and he took advantage of it.

During his reign, Khrushchev visited China, twice France, twice the United States, Switzerland, Iran, Ghana, Indonesia, Guinea, Afghanistan, Sudan, Egypt, Algeria, Burma, Thailand, India, several times Finland, and so on and so forth. His visits were not just long, but protracted, with numerous sightseeing tours, visits to factories, farms, universities, rallies, concerts, banquets, riding both elephant and camel. And if to America - on an ocean liner, to Great Britain - on a cruiser.

And those countries that lay under the tracks of Soviet tanks - Poland, Hungary, Bulgaria, Romania, East Germany, Czechoslovakia, Mongolia - Khrushchev considered it his duty to visit almost every year.

And he traveled around his country without stopping. And our country is a big one. Here Khrushchev was on the cotton plantations of Uzbekistan, and here - on the construction of the Kremenchug hydroelectric power plant, then he was with the oil workers of Baku, then with the miners of Donbass. He watched the fleet exercises, in the desert gave advice to the builders of the Great Karakum Canal, taught the creators of the IS-7 heavy tank the basics of modern combat.

Then there are the visits of foreign guests. Some from Nepal, some from India, some from Cuba, some from Fidel for a month and a half, and some from Algeria. A special case - guests from the awakening Africa. They came to us in a column, in shoals, replacing one after another. And all - to fanfares and national anthems, with speeches and solemn marches of the guard of honor, with a ride through the streets of jubilant Moscow, with a visit to Lenin's Mausoleum and the solemn laying of wreaths, with the presentation of orders to dear guests, with endless receptions and banquets, with the signing of protocols and agreements, with the distribution to countless friends of ships and airplanes, tanks and armored personnel carriers, guns and mortars, tractors and combines, house-building plants and unique technologies.

Frol Romanich Kozlov welcomed it all: come on, come on, Nikita Sergeyich, peace and friendship! You should also go to Australia. On kangaroo flocks to admire. For two or three weeks ...

Khrushchev traveled, Kozlov ruled the country, not arguing with Khrushchev, agreeing, copying him even in small things, not flaunting in his presence neither his power, nor his designs, nor his increasing influence on the state apparatus, but persistently and firmly promoting his own line, placing his own people. Only in the Armed Forces he had no support. That is why Frol Romanovich is friendly with generals and marshals. He is a frequent and grateful guest at the generals' libations. He does not interrupt and does not argue. He listens attentively, he delves, he cares.

At the top of the Armed Forces, many people understood the situation and appreciated it. Therefore, the presence of this completely civilian man in the company of front-line soldiers did not seem strange. Rather the opposite: marshals and generals are celebrating together with their Supreme Commander-in-Chief, even though he is a purely civilian man, even though he does not yet officially hold such a position.

Everything that day was the same as it was everywhere in our neighborhood, when our fighting friends gathered together: stories, jokes, songs about the dark night and about the fire in the cramped stove. True, they sang without a harmonica.

And the front dosage is sacred.

Drinks. Snack. We drank some more. We drank to the new head of state, Chairman of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR, Lieutenant General Leonid Brezhnev.

The topic of the war somehow imperceptibly, but inevitably jumped to the topic of the downed American airplane.

And Nikita was carried away: an invisible airplane, and we - the first missile! We'll give them Kuzkin's

mother! Khrushchev curls his fingers:

— The world's first intercontinental ballistic missile is ours!

— The first satellite is ours!

— We'll soon make a bomb like no one else the world has!

— We'll be the first to send a man into space! Korolev promised by the end of the year.

— Africa is waking up!

— Asia is waking up!

— Latin America is waking up! Fidel will build socialism in Cuba! And the

conclusion is: It's time! It's time to end capitalism!

Just recently, on January 14, 1960, the radiant Nikita Khrushchev announced from the rostrum of the session of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR that the past year 1959 would go down in history as the first year of the unfolding construction of communism in the Soviet Union. The first phase of communism would be built by 1970, the final triumph by 1980.

But communism cannot exist alongside the monstrous oppression of people in capitalist countries. It is time to put an end to it.

5

The Chief of the GRU, Army General Serov Ivan Alexandrovich, lifted his slightly heavier head, shook it, driving away a slight hop. What does he hear? Is it time to put an end to it? With what forces?

Ivan Alexandrovich was a sharp man. Ruled harshly. He liked shootings. He did not like empty slothfulness in the execution of sentences, but active and creative participation in them. He liked to show his subordinates an example: that's how it should be done! Shoot in the hollow where the skull and spine meet.

All his life Ivan Alexandrovich followed Khrushchev like an icebreaker. He supported him always and in everything. The friendly group pushed Khrushchev upwards, and he, having climbed a little higher, pulled the group after him.

Zhukov used to be in the group, too. He saved Khrushchev in 1957. But Zhukov got carried away. I had to knock him out of the pack.

Everything would be fine, but Khrushchev himself is skidding. Oh, how it's drifting. He still does not want to forget Kuzkina's mother. Looked the chief of the GRU in the eyes of Brezhnev Leonid Ilyich, the most loyal associate of Khrushchev. He saw nothing interesting. He looked into the eyes of Kozlov Frol Romanovich, Malinovsky, Biryuzov, Nedelin. And then suddenly I ran into Varentsov's gaze.

And they understood each other.

6

The next Sunday at the dacha of Chief Marshal of Artillery Varentsov, the smoke is billowing. Under a big apple tree the cook is grilling kebabs. The smell is all over the garden, all over the forest. Music is blaring. The guests are singing a fashionable song about how silence is wandering through the city at night.

And Chief Marshal of Artillery Varentsov has a serious conversation with the head of the GRU, Army General Serov. They've stepped aside.

— Nikita's on a tear. I don't think he's gonna do anything wrong.

— He will.

— You know, Ivan Alexandrovich, things may be much more serious than we .

— He's to something, and it could end badly. For all of us. All of us.

— We need to think about the options.

7

On May 16, 1960, the leaders of the four powers, the Soviet Union, the United States, Great Britain, and France, met in Paris. The main issue was Berlin.

In World War II, Germany was defeated and divided into four zones of occupation: Soviet, American, British and French. In addition, Berlin, which was in the Soviet zone, was also divided into four sectors, and also into Soviet, American, British and French sectors.

The three zones of Germany that had been occupied by the Western Allies merged into Federal Germany. The three sectors of Berlin became West Berlin.

And West Berlin became a thorn in the side of socialism.

In the Soviet zone, social justice triumphed, while in West Germany, exploitation of man by man, capitalist slavery, prevailed. For this reason, already a few years after the war, life in West Germany and West Berlin began to differ strikingly from life in East Germany and East Berlin.

And the Germans of the East ran to the West.

The border between Germany East and Germany West has been sealed. But what to do with Berlin? It is a single city with the capital of the socialist state, the German Democratic Republic, and right there, a few blocks away, there is vile, vile, vile, vile, vile, vile, rotting, nauseating capitalism with fancy stores that have everything.

East Germans would come to the capital of their socialist state and cross the street into stinking capitalism. There they asked for political asylum. Then by airplane to West Germany.

It was not the worst Germans who fled East Germany. On the contrary, it was the most talented. Engineers, doctors and teachers, journalists and musicians, artists and painters, architects and agronomists, geologists and diplomats fled. Workers and peasants were not lagging behind. Life in the West was especially attractive for young people. A separate article - officers, sergeants and soldiers of the army, aviation and navy, police, border troops, state security. They were particularly eager to get into the labor market.

The standard of living in West Germany was rising rapidly. Along with this growth, the flow of refugees from East Germany also increased. At first, just a few. Then dozens. It reached hundreds. In the summer of 1960, the flow of refugees reached a rate of one person per minute. 60 people every hour. 1,500 a day. A quarter of a million a year.

Socialist Germany was melting like ice on a griddle. Villages and city blocks were emptying out.

The possibilities of the first socialist state on German soil were fully utilized by their class brothers: the Poles, Czechs, Hungarians, Romanians, and Bulgarians. Their "Big Brother", the Soviet Union, was leading by example.

In East Germany there was the most powerful grouping of ground troops in the world. Clearly, these were Soviet Army troops. Visits to East Berlin by Soviet servicemen, if they were not serving in East Berlin itself, were not welcome. But that didn't save it. They came to Berlin secretly. And took advantage of the opportunity to escape.

Unlimited forces and means were thrown into preventing escape. Intensive work was carried out among Soviet soldiers and officers, the meaning of which can be expressed in two words: let us escape! There were those who answered: let's run away! Such a soldier would run over to the American zone, he would be interrogated by the Americans, the soldier would tell everything he knew. Then he was shot for treason. An unpleasant moment was the sudden transition of the "Americans" to native Soviet matryugas.

The same work was carried out among the population of East Germany.

But the cost of provocateurs did not pay off. Those who dared to escape usually ran away without consulting or trusting anyone.... Among them were also those who yesterday, on the orders of the KGB, had themselves induced their comrades to escape.

But it was not even the mass exodus of the people that was the main evil. The main thing was that everyone realized that things were better there! And we are doing something wrong. Something must be changed.

The comrades in the Kremlin had to make up their

minds. And what was that?

So there gathered in Paris the gentlemen comrades: Eisenhower, Macmillan, de Gaulle and Khrushchev - the leaders of the countries that had divided Germany and Berlin after the war. Whatever solution the leaders of the West proposed was unacceptable to the Soviet Union. With any solution, people would still flee to a normal life in which there were no party secretaries and collective farms, no one right way and no favorite leader, but there were clothes and shoes, bread and butter, the opportunity to join any party you liked, to write whatever you wanted in the newspaper.

Khrushchev, as always, without thinking, proposed a summit meeting to find a solution to the Berlin problem. And when the meeting was scheduled, he suddenly realized that nothing good could be expected from this meeting. One could demand from the damned capitalists that they bring back all those who defected to them. But they wouldn't agree to that. And even if they did, they would still keep the best and most necessary ones.

Even if they bring everyone back, it won't make the problem go away. Everyone will still know that we are doing something wrong.

What was left for poor Khrushchev?

All that was left was to disrupt the meeting. And a downed spy plane was just the thing.

On May 16, 1960, Nikita Khrushchev demanded an apology from the president of the United States for conducting espionage against the Soviet Union.

The demand was impossible to fulfill. The fact is that a state and the leader who represents that state have no right to ask forgiveness from anyone. This is how it was established many hundreds, if not thousands, of years ago. If the government of one state offered something to the government of another state, and then changed its point of view, in this case, too, no one apologizes to anyone. In this situation, the ambassador is recalled. They declare: the Ambassador has made a mistake, we did not and could not propose such a thing, he said on his own behalf. Everyone understands: the ambassador only passed on what he was ordered to. But still, it's his fault, and only ! And he is removed from his post. And a new one is sent. That's the way it is.

If the state has made some mistake and it is not possible to blame this mistake on the ambassador, then in this case no one apologizes to anyone.

And Khrushchev insisted: Eisenhower, apologize!

During World War II, Soviet intelligence was active against the United States, its main ally in the war against Hitler. Soviet intelligence stole the secrets of atomic weapons. The spy network was exposed. But the Americans did not demand an apology, realizing that the state and its leaders had no right to make such apologies.

By the way, the spy network was not uncovered through the efforts of the FBI and the American police. It was simply that a Soviet encrypter in Canada, having seized a briefcase of top secret documents, left the Soviet embassy and went to the first government official he could find to ask for asylum.

In May 1960, while Khrushchev was demanding an apology, Rudolf Abel, a Soviet intelligence agent, was in prison in the United States. He was caught and imprisoned. America did not demand an apology for his activities. But Abel got into the vaults. The American pilot didn't get into the vaults. He couldn't even see them from above. Safes not in the field, they're under the roofs. So he only saw the roofs.

Khrushchev insisted. The President of the United States stood his ground. He had no right to apologize.

If that was the case, there would be no summit meeting," Khrushchev slammed the door and flew back

to Moscow.

And the problem of Berlin remained.

Army General Ivan ALEXANDROVICH SEROV was born in 1905. Served in the artillery. During the Great Purge of 1937-38 Stalin exterminated first almost all the generation of Chekists of Yagoda's time, then - a new generation of Chekists of Yezhov's time. In 1939, Stalin staffed the NKVD practically anew with the third generation of Chekists. There were thousands of vacancies. In the NKVD recruited military, party workers, graduates of educational institutions. In this stream was and Serov. And quickly rose up. Already in September 1939, he was sent to Kiev to the post of People's Commissar of Internal Affairs of Ukraine. During these years, Khrushchev was the First Secretary of the Communist Party of Ukraine, that is, in fact, a dictator, and Serov was the chief of the secret police of Ukraine.

On April 26, 1940, the Decree of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR was published on awarding a group of Chekists. For what exactly they were awarded, it was not reported. But the list included Kupriyanov, head of the Smolensk region UNKVD, Tokarev, head of the Kalinin region UNKVD, and Safonov, head of the Kharkov region UNKVD. By place and time these awards coincide with the shooting of Polish officers in the village of Katyn in the Smolensk region, in the village of Medny in the Kalinin region and in the village of Pyatihatka in the Kharkov region. The heads of NKVD departments of the regions where the execution was carried out received the Order of the Red Star and the Order of the Red Star.
"Badge of Honor". And at the head of the list of awardees - Commissar of State Security 3rd rank Serov, who was honored with the highest state award - the Order of Lenin.

During the war, Serov was deputy to the all-powerful chief of the NKVD, Lavrentiy Pavlovich Beria. He finished the war as a colonel general, Hero of the Soviet Union. After Stalin's death, Khrushchev put Serov in charge of the KGB. In 1956, Serov was one of the leaders of the suppression of the Hungarian Revolution.
Received the nickname "Butcher". From 1958, he was Chief of the GRU of the General Staff, Deputy Chief of the General Staff for Intelligence. Since 1939, Serov remained a personal friend of Khrushchev and supported him in all his battles for power.

G L A V A 6.

1

The Soviet Union does not have TV sets and refrigerators like America. But we are ahead of the U.S. in space. But we make rockets and have blocked the Yenisei River. Soon the very first man will fly into space. And it will be our, Soviet man!

July 1960. Meeting on the problems of the design of a spacesuit for a cosmonaut. The chief designer of rocket and space systems Korolev Sergei Pavlovich has so much trouble, so many problems, so much nervousness every day. Khrushchev is rushing the launch of the first cosmonaut. We must get ahead of the Americans! We must jump into space first at any cost.

That's easy to say: at any price. Only nobody wants to pay this price. On October 4, 1957, Korolev launched the first artificial satellite on his 8K71 rocket, and the Nobel Committee appealed to Khrushchev: name the chief designer, he is worthy of the highest awards and distinctions. Khrushchev replied: the first artificial satellite is a victory of the entire Soviet people, award all our people!

No one, of course, made two hundred million of our citizens Nobel laureates. The Nobel Prize in Physics that year went to someone else for some very different discoveries and accomplishments. Chief Designer Korolev was classified to such an extent that the glory of space triumphs did not touch him at all. The glory flew by. That's what it means: at any cost.

And Khrushchev was pushing: Come on, come on!

Korolev promised Khrushchev to launch a cosmonaut in December 1960.

But the problems multiplied. And while Korolev was fully occupied with space, competitor Mishka Yangel pushed through his 8K63 rocket for the Strategic Missile Forces. A range of 2,100 kilometers. When Korolev first saw it, he snorted contemptuously: what a pencil? Yes, it will break even at the start. But the rocket didn't break. It flew. And it was taken into service.

And the same Yangel is preparing to test the 8K65 missile. Range - 4,500 kilometers. But it will also be adopted by the Strategic Missile Forces.

Yangel was a little late with the 8K64 missile. It will have a range of 11-13 thousand kilometers. But soon it will be tested as well. Korolev is in space, but the Strategic Missile Forces are based on Yangel's rockets. Why do we need Yangel's missile with intercontinental range? Because to displace from this field Korolev's 8K74, which was put into service, but in a single copy. There is no mass deployment!

Korolev's problem was that he was the first. Korolev was building an intercontinental ballistic missile, the 8K71, capable of delivering a thermonuclear charge weighing five and a half tons to America. That was the order. But while Korolev was building the missile, the atomic engineers managed to drastically reduce the weight of the charge while maintaining its power. And it turned out that Korolev's rocket had excessive power.

It's good for space exploration, but generals don't need such a huge, expensive and complicated one. They need something smaller, suitable for mass deployment. This "something" is what Yangel is creating.

There is already a joke among generals: Yangel works for us, while Korolev works for TASS. To put it simply, Yangel does what is necessary to increase the country's combat power, while Korolev is busy showing off, surprising the world with new space triumphs.

The most frustrating thing is that this is true. Korolev's firm manages not to choke only because earlier he had a good operational-tactical missile 8K11 with a range of 150 kilometers. But even from this area Korolev will soon be ousted by Makeyev with his Izdeliye 8K14.

Korolev is saved only by space. Korolev's rockets launch satellites. But the fulfillment of the promise made to Khrushchev is thwarted. In December 1960, a man in space clearly will not fly. If not in December, when? And if the Americans launch first?

Every day, hundreds of problems have to be tied up and sorted out. A seemingly insignificant thing like urinating in zero gravity. The problem is reported by a plump female doctor. The staff here is strictly male. There's one exception. And the exception is so gorgeous and busty that men avert their eyes. It's impossible to look. It's like the sun. It's blinding.

In the meantime, she proposes a solution: on the urinary organ, on this very thing, we'll put this rubber hose.

Chief Designer Korolev was on the verge of a breakdown, and here was a feisty woman talking nonsense. The Chief Designer threw a pencil in his heart so that it clattered on the table:

- Valentina Ivanovna, have you ever held this very thing in your hands?

2

On September 9, 1960 at 19:00 the turbo-electric ship "Baltika" gave up her moorings and, bidding farewell to her home port with a prolonged honk, set a course for New York. Comrade Nikita Khrushchev, First Secretary of the CPSU Central Committee and Chairman of the USSR Council of Ministers, and his entourage were on board.

The turbo-electric ship "Vyacheslav Molotov" was built in Holland by order of the Soviet Union. It was laid down before World War II, and completed under Hitler's occupation and handed over to the Soviet Union.
"Molotov" to the Soviet Union. Good thing, Hitler was a faithful ally of comrade Stalin and did not interfere with the fulfillment of orders for the homeland of the world proletariat. After the coup d'état of 1957, the proud name of Molotov on board the ship was cut down with chisels and a new name was welded on - "Baltika".

The "Baltica" is running across the ocean, its nose crushing emerald water slopes, throwing thousand-ton masses of water to the sides.

Every morning Khrushchev gets up invariably at six o'clock in the morning. When going up to the captain's bridge, he always asks for permission.

This man somehow combined incompatible qualities. All those who knew him closely testify to one thing: businesslike, hardworking, resolute, affable, not malicious, not vindictive, not capricious, not pampered, not vindictive. Khrushchev always called his drivers, bodyguards and all those whom we in those years called "servants", only by name and patronymic and only in "you". He always knew who had a son born and whose father died. He remembered the birthdays of hundreds of people and congratulated everyone every year, not forgetting anyone, even those he no longer needed. He helped people, and he did it not for profit, but out of genuine kindness.

And at the same time... He signed death sentences for thousands of people whom he had never seen in person - without going into details, without considering the degree of guilt. He was the most cunning of Stalin's inner circle. There were 11 republics within the Soviet Union. In 1937-38, the leaders of these republics were exterminated in herds. Sometimes several times. Only two survived: Beria in Georgia and Khrushchev in Ukraine. On his way to power, Khrushchev cheated, cheated, cheated, cheated, fooled, fooled, fooled, fooled, fooled, fooled around such "bison" like Beria, Molotov, Malenkov, Kaganovich, Zhukov. And the death of Stalin himself on his conscience.

And now he's sailing to America. Upper deck suite on the starboard side. What's with the precious woodwork? Dutch craftsmen! What am I? A capitalist? Rip off all the precious wood trim! Plastic is the material of the future! Cover the cabin with pink plastic panels!

Khrushchev had been to America once before. The first time, a year ago, he was cheerful and friendly. America welcomed Khrushchev as a dear guest. True, it was not without suicidal boasting. What are your secrets, - said the malleable Nikita Sergeyevich, - we read all your ciphers, even the most complicated ones.

Immediately, the most diverse ciphers of America and its allies were changed. Not only that, the coding system itself was changed, completely new methods and principles of information closure were introduced.
Decades of work by many thousands of teams of Soviet mathematicians were blurred by one phrase of a boastful chatterer.

Otherwise, fair Marquise, everything was just .

This was to be followed by a visit of the US President to the Soviet Union. But Khrushchev canceled the return visit: if you don't apologize for the spy flight, you have no business in our country!

And he went to America himself.

No one invited him here, no one called him. But in America is the United Nations Organization - Khrushchev is not going to visit the Americans, but to the UN, to personally represent the Soviet Union at the session of the General Assembly.

America met Khrushchev as an uninvited guest. We didn't invite you! You want to dock at the Manhattan docks? Over there, on that dirty pier by the abandoned warehouses. And no one to take the moorings. Sorry, darling, we're free. The dockers are on strike. Not everywhere. Only on this unclean place, where gray rats as big as a good dog run around in broad daylight.

Khrushchev wiped himself. And presented the Soviet Union in all its glory.

On September 23, 1960, from the podium of the UN, Nikita again promised the Americans to show Kuzkina's mother.

The problem is that at the UN, simultaneous interpreters translate into several languages at once. The meaning of the phrase was completely incomprehensible. But there was an eerie, ominous sound in that phrase. And again, it was something about someone's mother.

There are plenty of slackers at the UN. They sit for days and weeks. Khrushchev wasn't in a hurry. He sat. Days and weeks. As if all the problems at home were solved. Khrushchev interrupted speakers, shouted threats and insults. Khrushchev would rush to the podium and talk nonstop. When there were not enough words, he banged his shoe on the table.

Housing for Khrushchev at the Permanent Mission of the USSR to the UN. Khrushchev was angry: why a mansion in the

in such a beautiful place? We're proletarians! Sell immediately, buy away from the luxury villas and palaces, our place is in the working-class neighborhoods!

On October 1, Khrushchev said: True democracy is possible only under socialism, under communism. And you have Negroes being lynched and hanged.

October 11: We'll beat you! We have missile production put on a conveyor belt. Recently I was at a factory and saw how missiles come out there like sausages from a machine gun.

October 13: You wanted, perhaps, to send the ship I was following to the bottom? Please. I'll go down, but I'll take you with me, so you know!

3

And it was a simple sailor who disgraced Khrushchev.

The crew of the "Baltika" were specially selected, specially checked. But one sailor escaped in New York. And asked for political asylum...

The next day every newspaper in America carried his portrait and his asylum application.

Khrushchev's hysterical cries about the benefits of socialism were immediately silenced. He never set foot aboard the Baltika again. He called an airplane and flew to Moscow.

4

The Soviet Union stood on two whales. And these whales were constantly fighting among themselves worse than dogs in a

wild pack. The first whale was total secrecy. Everything in the Soviet Union was classified. Everything.

The second whale is total showmanship. Showmanship in everything. In the demonstration of living standards, in space flights, in the production of milk and meat, in the smelting of iron and steel, in the nationwide craving for knowledge, in the consumption (very low) of alcoholic beverages by the population, in the adoration of great leaders by the masses, in the fight against crime, in the friendship of peoples, in the great achievements of science and culture and, understandably, in the military.

Nikita Khrushchev announced that he had been to a factory where rockets like sausages come off the conveyor belt. No one is supposed to know where the missile factory is. It's a great secret. But recently Khrushchev was in Dnepropetrovsk, which was reported by all newspapers. That's why we could guess where this terribly secret plant was located. It was indeed there. It was the Yuzhny Machine-Building Plant - Yuzhmash. Yangel worked there.

5

In Moscow, Khrushchev, who had arrived from America, was waiting for good news.

Chief Designer Mikhail Yangel promised to beat his rival Chief Designer Korolev in creating the newest intercontinental ballistic missile. Reported to Khrushchev: Yangel keeps his word. On October 21, 1960 Product 8K64 was taken to the launch pad for the first time.

On October 20, Yangel's deputy Lev Berlin turned 40. We didn't celebrate. No time. We will launch the product, then we will celebrate.

They laughed: Comrade Khrushchev needed this rocket to show the Americans Kuzkin's mother and solve the Berlin question. And this beauty is made by an outstanding engineer named Berlin!

Yangel Mikhail Kuzmich Yangel himself will be 49 years old on October 25, so the whole team decided to merge the successful launch and the birthdays of the management into one common holiday.

Item 8K64 is a huge carcass. Three meters in diameter, 34 meters high. It's a twelve-story house. But the product turned out to be graceful and light. It weighs only ten tons. But it's fueled. 130 tons of deadly liquid is poured into it. The 8K64 can deliver a charge of three or six megatons. Depending on the power of the charge and, therefore, its weight, the range will be 13 or 11 thousand kilometers. Just right - across the Pole to America! The same way our hero pilots once flew to America on Pavel Sukhoi's airplane.

On October 24, 1960 everything is ready for the launch of the product. The task is simple: at any cost to be in time for the holiday, for November 7, the anniversary of the Great October Socialist Revolution. This will be our gift to dear Nikita Khrushchev and the entire Soviet people.

Yangel's team worked hard. The deadline was November 6. But the guys did their best and completed all the work ahead of schedule by October 24! Two weeks to spare!

Better two weeks early than a minute late. The rocket is ready! The engineers are all over it. Each of them wants his system to work, to make sure that it does not fail. Here and General Designer Yangel, here and the Chairman of the State Commission, Commander-in-Chief of the Strategic Missile Forces, Chief Marshal of Artillery Nedelin.

And suddenly...

At the very last moment a fault is detected in the electrical circuits. What to do? According to the instructions - cancel the start, drain the fuel, make repairs...

Refueling a rocket with fuel and oxidizer is difficult and extremely dangerous. Draining oxidizer and fuel is a more difficult and more dangerous task. If tens of tons of aggressive poisonous muck is drained, then after that it is necessary to check the whole rocket down to the last screw, to wash and purge all containers and pipelines. Drain oxidizer and propellant - postpone the launch for a month.

So what do we do?

Violate the manual! That's what you do! Fix the malfunction right on the fueled rocket! Otherwise we won't make it by November 7! The chief designer is nervous, sticks a cigarette in his mouth. He's reminded: it could kill him. You can't smoke here. The designer retired to the bunker, grumbling.

The guys are working. Don't worry, Comrade Yangel! The malfunction will be fixed. The launch will happen exactly as planned. At altitude, the icy steppe wind penetrates to the bones. Hands shiver from cold and fatigue. People work until complete exhaustion. Nervousness is strengthened by the presence of high command. And the bosses are always with an entourage. The bosses show a slight impatience, which is instantly reinforced by the entourage: come on, come on!
The last few days, everyone's been sleeping lightly. And so have the bosses. Fatigue is knocking you off your feet. Sometimes the very possibility of understanding the meaning of the operations being performed is lost.
But people keep working!

In order to detect a malfunction, cables have to be disconnected. All locks against unauthorized launch of the second stage are removed. At this time, the command center console decided to check the operation of the program current distributor. The command was given to the distributor, the smart machine clearly executed the order: the second stage activation circuit is energized. Components of fuel and oxidizer of the second stage joined ...

Then they will write in the document on the results of the investigation: unauthorized engine start. On the one hand, it's true. The operator at the console did not want to start the engine at all. But if you look at it from the other side, then the start should be considered very much authorized. The blocking was removed, the command was given, and the engine executed the command correctly.

A disaster is never the result of a single mistake. Catastrophe occurs as a result of a series of errors, with each successive one exacerbating all previous ones.

The order to prepare the launch by a specific date was a mistake. For the last months, weeks and days the work was carried out in the emergency mode, violating all norms, instructions and rules, breaking laws and prohibitions.

It was a criminal decision to check electrical circuits on a fueled rocket. It was a crime to keep so

many people near a rocket ready for launch.

It was a mistake to remove the lock against unauthorized start.

It was a mistake to check the current distributor without having a thousand percent certainty that all of the systems that lock the engine against unauthorized starting were in place.

The operator pressed a button and....

A powerful fountain of devilish white fire burst out of the nozzle with a monstrous roar. The huge first stage rests peacefully on the launch table. And at the height of the eighth floor, the engine of the second stage, which is supposed to be activated only outside the atmosphere, has already roared. The second stage has already been dragged into space, it strives upward, trying to break away from the first stage, deafening the surroundings with infernal rumble, showering the lower first stage with infernal fire. People from the platforms. They jump like divers in competition. However, the height is higher here, and it is not a pool of water, but the concrete of the spaceport.

That's where the first stage rumbled.

An explosion of terrible force, twisting the steel trusses, hurled the burning men in all directions.

The green sticky foam, which burns to ashes and kills all living things, spread out in hot shreds. Burning torches ran out of the white flames, fell to the ground, trying to knock down the flames and, shuddering in the last convulsions, stopped, turning into black heads.

6

Mikhail Kuzmich Yangel, Chief Designer, was saved by nerves. He desperately wanted to smoke at the moment of

electrical system failure. That's why he was in the bunker. He jumped out at the moment of the explosion to save his men.

He got hit, too. He got burned, too. A little.

Overcoming the pain, he picked up the red phone: Give me Khrushchev.

Tomorrow is Yangel's birthday. Today his deputy Lyova Berlin burned to white ashes. There's nothing left of him. Today the Commander-in-Chief of the Strategic Missile Forces, Chief Marshal of Artillery Nedelin Mitrofan Ivanovich, burned to ashes. His ashes were identified by the melted Gold Star of the Hero of the Soviet Union. Today, dozens of the best rocket specialists were burned.

Yangel reports: send help, here burned, poisoned by poisonous fumes, burned by acid. We need doctors, we need means of evacuation, we need medicines.

- Why didn't you burn yourself? - Khrushchev hissed. And hung up the phone.

7

Khrushchev to KGB Chairman Shelepin: announce that Marshal Nedelin died in an airplane crash. Keep silent about the rest. Military men should be buried in the forbidden zone of the missile range, Yuzhmash designers - in Dnepropetrovsk, but not in one place, but at different ends of the cemetery at different times, the date of death should not be written on the gravestones, only the year: 1960. So that no one could figure out that many people died on the same day.

Khrushchev to Korolev: your competitor has shit himself. What are we going to do?

There are many options. The most tasty: Yangel to punish, kicked out of work, and a huge, state-of-the-art equipped rocket plant Yuzhmash and the design office at it to give Korolev's firm. What is not an option? And there will be a giant centralized production, design offices and factories in Moscow, Dnepropetrovsk, Kuibyshev. Unite all forces into one fist! And competition? Well, there is also a competitor, Chelomey, there is also Makeev. They make rockets too. And very good ones.

There could have been other options...

But Korolev had his own solution. As soon as he learned about the explosion at a competitor, he immediately realized that the question about the fate of Yangel and his firm will be asked. So he answered Khrushchev without hesitation: it can happen to anyone, do not punish Yangel and do not prevent him from working.

Fate confirmed the correctness of Korolev's words: it can happen to anyone. Exactly three years later, on October 24, 1963, Korolev's new product 8K75 burned up at the launch site. Together with people.

Chief Marshal of Artillery SERGEY SERGEYEVICH VARENTSOV was born in 1901. Served in the artillery. In 1941 - colonel, chief of artillery of the 6th Rifle Corps of the 6th Army of the South-Western Front. In the Kiev catastrophe he managed to save the personnel and a significant part of the armament and escape from the ring of encirclement. In November 1941 he received the rank of major-general of artillery. Rapidly rose in the course of the war. In February 1943 - Lieutenant General of Artillery, in October of the same year - Colonel-General of Artillery. From October 1942 until the end of the war - Chief of Artillery of the Voronezh Front, which in 1943 was transformed into the 1st Ukrainian Front. A member of the military council, that is, the political supervisor of the Voronezh (1st Ukrainian) Front was Khrushchev.

In the Battle of Kursk, Varentsov was the initiator of the famous artillery counterpreparation, when a few minutes before the start of the German offensive, an artillery strike of unprecedented power was delivered to the prepared German troops. During the Kiev offensive operation Varentsov managed to concentrate 300-350 guns for each kilometer of the breakthrough front and the front cracked. For the Berlin operation he was awarded the title of Hero of the Soviet Union. Since 1951 - Head of the Main Artillery Directorate. Then - commander of missile forces and artillery of the Army. Varentsov maintained friendly relations with Khrushchev since 1942.

SERGEY PAVLOVICH KOROLEV. Born in 1907. At the age of 16 he was a lecturer on the elimination of aviation illiteracy. In 1931 he created GIRD - Group for the Study of Jet Propulsion, which soon became a scientific research institute. In 1933 - the first successful launch of a rocket. In 1936-1937 he created and brought to the test stage an antiaircraft rocket on solid fuel and a long-range rocket on liquid fuel.

In 1938 he was arrested and subjected to cruel torture. He did not admit the guilt they tried to impute to him. Sentenced to death. The list, which included Korolev, was signed by Stalin, Molotov, Voroshilov and Kaganovich. However, this was the time when the extermination machine began to slow down. Firing squads were replaced by camps at Kolyma. He mined gold for the homeland of the world proletariat. Then he was sent to a special prison, where he worked on the projects of Pe-2 and Tupolev bombers under the guidance of Z/k Tupolev. In 1944 he was released, but not rehabilitated.

After the war he creates a whole series of missiles for various purposes.

Received the highest state awards, officially being an enemy of the people. He was rehabilitated in 1957.

Founder of practical cosmonautics. Creator of the R-7 rocket (8K71), also known as the "Magnificent Seven", which was used to launch the first artificial satellite and the world's first human space flight. The R-7 rocket is an outstanding example of 20th century technology; its basic layout and engines are not obsolete even half a century after the first flight; a series of rockets based on the R-7 was developed.

Soyuz carriers, which are still in operation today.

All his life Korolev was strictly classified. He was referred to as "chief designer of rocket and space systems" without mentioning his name.

Twice Hero of Socialist Labor, Lenin Prize laureate.

Died at the age of 59 on the operating table. World fame came to him on the day of his death.

G L A V A 7.

1

Kirill Semyonovich Moskalenko was known to Khrushchev from the very beginning of the war, from the summer of 1941. Major-General of Artillery Moskalenko commanded an artillery anti-tank brigade in the South-Western strategic direction, where Khrushchev was political commissar. Two months into the war, bypassing the positions of deputy division commander, division commander and deputy corps commander, Moskalenko from the brigade went straight up to the corps. Another six months later, jumping the post of deputy commander of the army, he was given command of the 38th Army. The paths of Khrushchev and Moskalenko lay side by side: a terrible defeat in the land of Ukraine in the terrible summer of 1941, retreat, counterattacks and counteroffensives, retreat again, a grandiose offensive near Kharkov in the spring of 1942 and the terrible disaster that ended it, retreat, or rather - flight to Stalingrad, victorious counteroffensive at Stalingrad, again Kharkov, Kursk Bulge, a dash to the Dnieper, the liberation of Kiev ....

Moskalenko finished the war as Colonel General, Hero of the Soviet Union. In 1953, Khrushchev put Colonel General Moskalenko in charge of the group that arrested the all-powerful chief of the secret police, Marshal of the Soviet Union Beria. For his arrest of Beria, Moskalenko was promoted to the rank of General of the Army; two years later he became Marshal of the Soviet Union.

On October 24, 1960, the Commander-in-Chief of the Strategic Missile Forces, Chief Marshal of Artillery Nedelin died during the test of a new intercontinental ballistic missile. Who was take his place?

And Khrushchev made up his mind: Moskalenko.

2

Plans for nuclear strikes against the enemy are developed by the Main Operational Directorate of the General Staff, deploying the targets to the executors.

The Chief of the General Staff, Marshal of the Soviet Union Zakharov, personally assigned the combat task to the new Commander-in-Chief of the Strategic Missile Forces, Marshal of the Soviet Union Moskalenko.

To summarize, there are two targets for defeat: the short-range target is Europe, the long-range target is the United States. There are four executors: the Strategic Missile , the missile forces of the Ground Forces, the Air Force and the Navy.

Marshal of the Soviet Union Moskalenko decided to assess the situation personally. First of all, Europe. Here the main partner of the Strategic Missile Forces would be the Ground Forces, of course, in close cooperation with the aviation and navy.

Marshal Moskalenko sat down in the chair that his predecessor had occupied not so long ago. The case is new, unfamiliar.

It should be understood that the secrecy surrounding the Strategic Missile Forces was total. Marshal of the Soviet Union Moskalenko, since he was not directly related to these troops, was not supposed to know much more about them than all other Soviet people. Now he had to make the leap from complete ignorance to the same complete possession of an almost inexhaustible amount of information, to delve into thousands of problems of the Strategic Missile Forces, to find solutions to them.

The marshal looked around. He pressed the button:

— Chief of Staff to me.

The Chief of the Main Staff of the Strategic Missile Forces showed up immediately. He knew that the new Commander-in-Chief would summon him first.

— Status report, Colonel General.

— The Strategic Missile Forces are subordinate to the Minister of Defense and the General Staff. The Strategic Missile Forces include the command, the General Staff, the main and two reserve command posts, two missile armies, a separate missile corps, three test sites, scientific and educational institutions, and support units and subdivisions.

— What missiles?

— 8K63 with a range of two hundred. Next year we expect the 8K65 missile with a range of four and a half thousand.

— What are our goals in Europe?

Reported the chief of staff: short, clear and understandable.

After that, Marshal of the Soviet Union Moskalenko has to link his tasks to the strikes of the Ground Forces missileers.

Commander of the Rocket Forces and Artillery of the Ground Forces, Chief Marshal of Artillery Varentsov is ready to outline plans and designs.

The hall is spacious. No windows. There's no windows. The walls, floors, ceilings are just like a normal room. But it's an illusion. They're actually metal, double-paneled.

Between the two layers of steel are micro-silencers. That's why the walls, floor and ceiling hum slightly if you listen. The light is bright, but not blinding. The table is six by ten. The whole table is a relief map of Europe.

Marshal of the Soviet Union Marshal Moskalenko, Commander-in-Chief of the Strategic Missile Forces: In Europe I work on long-range targets, I am responsible for the bases of American nuclear submarines in Spain and Scotland - Rota and Holy Loch, the bases of the British fleet Portsmouth, Plymouth, Gibraltar. On me - bases of the fleets of Italy, Greece, France. On me - airfields of strategic aviation, command posts and communication centers. Obviously, behind me - Oban, Penmarsh, Pirmasens, Zweibrücken, Bitburg, Ramstein, Torrejon. A few minor things. The rest is yours.

Commander of Rocket Forces and Artillery of the Ground Forces, Chief Marshal of Artillery Varentsov: We will smash Europe with tank wedges. The main direction: Kassel - Luxembourg. We'll clear the way. You only shred America into pieces, and we will lay a nuclear carpet for tank armies across Europe.

Marshal Moskalenko smiled: there were no problems with the Army missileers. If war happens, we will smash Europe.

How are we going to deal with America?

Marshal Moskalenko thanked Chief Marshal of Artillery Varentsov for a clear and precise explanation of the situation, saying goodbye, expressed confidence that the Strategic Missile Forces and missileers of the Ground Forces would fulfill their tasks if the Motherland ordered. After that, he again summoned his Chief of Staff:

— Europe is clear. What do we have against America?

— Against America 8K74. Designer Korolev. In principle, it is the same 8K71 on which we launch satellites, only adapted for military needs.

— Range?

— 13,000.

— Charge?

— Three megatons.

— How many of them are in the line?

— Alone.

— One what? One brigade? One division? One missile army?

— One rocket. At Plesetsk.

— How is it protected from a possible enemy strike?

— No, I don't.

— If a command comes in, I press the button, how many seconds will it be before the start?

— 16 hours if you work continuously. But then because of fatigue of calculations mistakes can be made. Therefore, if with feeling, with purpose, with arrangement, then 23 hours and 40 minutes.

— Why not 24 hours?

— The designers thought that it did not sound very cheerful: readiness for launch in 24 hours after the command was received. Therefore, they did everything in their power to be able to report: preparation for launch takes less than a day.

— What is the probability that 8K74 will make it to America?

— 41 percent.

— A missile that is not protected by anything on the launch pad, with such reliability, with such a degree of readiness, and even in a single number is no good.

— No good, Comrade Marshal of the Soviet Union. But for lack of anything better, we decided to have one such missile in case of war. Although it's more suitable for peaceful purposes. All our satellites have been launched into space with this rocket. It's good for space travel.

— What's good?

— It's kerosene and liquid oxygen. It's safe. But a lot of time to prepare. And a colossal infrastructure. There's a whole oxygen plant right next to it. The missile was designed for a five-and-a-half-ton payload, but the nuclear warhead designers managed to reduce the weight of the payload. That's why this missile is overpowered. It's good for space, but you don't need that much to hit America.

— What's on the horizon?

— We will have four more such missiles. But if we want to increase readiness, if we want to shorten the preparation time, we need another missile with aggressive components.

— But there's no such rocket?

— It will be.

— When?

— Now it's unknown. The first such missile was taken to the launch site, where it crashed three days ago, killing your predecessor, a group of Strategic Missile Forces generals, the designers of the Dnepropetrovsk plant, and the entire launch crew.

Marshal of the Soviet Union Moskalenko, Commander-in-Chief of the Strategic Missile Forces, prepared hundreds of questions for his Chief of Staff. But after receiving the very first answers, he was silent for a long time.
Then he remembered the Chief of the Main Staff of the Strategic Missile Forces, who stretched out in front of him in respectful anticipation.

Marshal wanted to say something, but only waved his hand: get lost!

3

Marshal Moskalenko planned to work all day and all night. He decided to look into it. But the picture was unfolding in such a way that already at five o'clock in the evening he ordered the adjutant to bring the car. was necessary to go home, to drink a little something invigorating, to wrap myself in a silk quilted robe with embroidered gold Chinese dragons, to settle down in an armchair by the marble fireplace, to stir up the burning, slightly smoking birch logs, to be silent for a long time, to rethink everything that I had learned today from the pile of top secret papers.

Marshal's ZIS is flying along Moscow, tires rustling. The marshal remembered a joke: his tail is long, his balls are dirty, and his eyes are burning. Who is it?

It's a line for eggs in Moscow. And

then you tell the driver to stop!

An endless queue crawls along the sidewalk, dodging around the corner with a gray striped anaconda. To the

adjutant: find out what they're giving.

Ran adjutant, found out, came back, reported: the line for sausage.

Marshal remembered the words of Khrushchev, which he arrogantly threw at America, like a granite boulder in a mirrored shop window: we have missiles like sausages from a machine gun.

Both the driver, the adjutant, and the guards believe that the Soviet Union is a great missile power. Marshal of the Soviet Union Moskalenko himself believed it. He believed it until . But he listened to the report of the Chief of the Main Staff of the Strategic Missile Forces, listened to the chiefs of departments of the headquarters, talked to the chief designers of missiles Korolev, Makeev, Yangel, Chelomey, called the missile factories in Kuibyshev, Omsk, Dnepropetrovsk, demanded reports from the commanders of missile armies, commanders of missile corps and divisions. And now, leaning back on a soft leather cushion in the beige interior of the limousine, I realized that Nikita Khrushchev had not lied to America.

We have the same thing going on with missiles as we do with sausage making.

4

The issue of interaction of strategic forces during the possible defeat of America could be discussed by the Chief of the Strategic Missile Forces, Marshal of the Soviet Union Moskalenko, in his headquarters, inviting the Chief of the Air Force and the Chief of the Navy.

But Marshal of the Soviet Union Moskalenko decided to visit his colleagues himself.

The first visit to the Chief of the Air Force, Air Chief Marshal Vershinin.

The situation is very sad. The Americans have a B-52 strategic bomber. It can

to carry 30 tons of conventional bombs or a few nuclear bombs. There are over 700 of these bombers in America. They've perfected aerial refueling. Therefore, they can take off from their own territory, bomb the Union and return to America. In addition, and this is the main thing - they have bases around the Soviet Union: in Great Britain, Germany, Spain, Greece, Turkey, in Asian countries, on the islands of the Pacific Ocean. In case of a threat of attack, they can disperse strategic aviation throughout America, or they can keep it at forward bases.

In addition, the Americans have the B-47 medium strategic bomber. 1,260 vehicles. Plus 300 in reserve for preservation and another 300 for other functions, reconnaissance and so on. They can bomb from airfields in Europe or Asia, or they can fly from America, refuel in some Turkey or Greenland, bomb and return home.

In addition, they have adopted the world's first supersonic strategic bomber, the B-58. Two speeds of sound. Carries a three-megaton payload. That's not all. Britain also has strategic aviation. We should add to this that the Americans and their allies can bomb us with their tactical aviation from their bases in Europe and Asia, they do not need to fly across the ocean. Our tactical aviation will act against them on the continents. But it does not fly across the oceans to America.

— What do we have against America?

— We have two heavy strategic bombers in service: Myasishchev's 3M and Tupolev's Tu-95. The characteristics are about the same.

— Why have two heavy strategic bombers of different design but roughly the same performance at the same time?

— Because there is no one good. The disadvantages of one are offset by the advantages of the other. And vice versa.

— How many do have?

— Some of the released aircraft were converted into long-range reconnaissance, refueling, flying laboratories. The actual carriers of nuclear weapons, equipped with refueling, able to reach America and return, 48 Tu-95 and 29 3M.

— What are the odds of getting through the air defense system?

— None. The American B-52 has a practical ceiling of 16,000 meters. We have 12,000 meters. They fly to us from a short distance under cover of fighters. We have to cover the intercontinental range without cover. As soon as we leave our shores, as soon as we go over neutral waters, fighters from America, Britain, and Canada are attached to us.

— So I don't expect much help from strategic aviation?

— It goes like this. All hope is in our intercontinental missiles. Thank God we have good ones, and we have plenty of them.

5

The second visit was to Admiral Gorshkov, Commander-in-Chief of the Navy.

— What can a sea attack on our country be done by a supostat

from the sea? Admiral Gorshkov sighed:

— They've got the nuclear missile submarine George Washington on .

— What about us?

— Our first nuclear-powered missile submarine is undergoing factory and government testing.

— What's her name?

— K-19.

— Couldn't they think of anything more interesting? They have beautiful names for their boats, while we have letters and numbers, like convicts in a penal camp.

— That's the way we do it.

— We're a little behind, but we're still roughly equal: they have one boat, we'll have one soon. Right?

— No, 's not. There's no equality. They've got 16 missiles on the boat, we've got three.

— So they have a five-fold advantage.

— Not again. Our R-13 missile has a range of 600 kilometers their Polaris a range of 2,200 kilometers, they have already

have begun testing a new modification with a range of 2,800 kilometers. We have not seen anything close to it so far.

— And the charges?

— Ours is 1.5 times more powerful. But they're twice as accurate, but they shoot three times farther. On the new Polaris, the charge will be the same as ours, but the range will be four times longer and the accuracy four times better.

— What else can you do for me, Chief?

— They have an underwater launch. Ready to launch in a minute. We have a surface launch. Pre-launch preparation for 30 minutes. Then we surface and launch the missiles. We have to be on the surface for at least 12 minutes... In close proximity to the American shore.

— But that's not all, is it?

— Not all of them. In a year and a half, they will have nine nuclear missile boats, we will have five. They have 144 missiles on nine boats, we have 15 on five. They have solid fuel, we have liquid fuel. We store a missile for a maximum of three months, after which it must be unloaded and serviced. They have maintenance in a year and a half. Even if we have as many missiles on our boats as they have, they will have more missiles actually ready for launch. The most important thing is that they can launch missiles from waters where our fleet is not present, where they are covered by their surface fleet and aviation, while we are forced to launch missiles only where there is neither our surface fleet nor aviation, only where not only their fleet but also their coastal anti-submarine aviation is operating.

— That's it now?

— No. In a couple of months, the Americans will be fielding a supersonic deck bomber.
"The Vigilante. It will be able to carry the most powerful thermonuclear charges. A combat radius of 1,000 kilometers. They can launch strategic strikes from aircraft carriers. We don't have aircraft carriers.

— И?

— And let's not forget the fleets of Britain, Italy, Germany, Japan. France can help there, too.

6

And another meeting with Chief Marshal of Artillery Varentsov, commander of the Ground Forces' missile forces and artillery, to tie up the final details.

Varentsov: You will only smash America, and there will be no problems with Europe.

Marshal of the Soviet Union Moskalenko sighed deeply:

— I have no right to tell you, Sergei Sergeyevich, but you should know that I have nothing to chisel America with.

— do you mean?

— That's it. Again, I have no right to tell you this, but our secrecy will someday teach us all a sad lesson. We've been gulling ourselves with power that we don't have. In the event of war, you plan to clear the way to the ocean for armored armies with nuclear strikes. That may well be possible. But you should bear in mind that we'll get a kick in the teeth from the Americans for these strikes. And we have nothing to answer for. That's your point.

— What about space, satellites, flying around the moon?

— All the strategic missiles that the industry produces go straight to show off: fire one missile - launch a satellite, fire another - another one. There's not a damn thing on combat duty against America. That's the way it is.

— And strategic aviation? And nuclear ?

Marshal Moskalenko didn't answer anything. He just patted Varentsov on the shoulder, sighed and turned away.

7

The head of the GRU, Army General Serov, neatly folded the Pravda newspaper and stuffed it into the trash. It was just the newspaper with Comrade Khrushchev's statement that our missiles were coming off the assembly line like sausages.

— What are we going to do? - This is a question for the commander of missile forces and artillery of the Ground Forces, Chief Marshal of Artillery Varentsov.

This is a question to which there may not be an answer.

The job of any commander is to gather all the information about the enemy and his troops, assess the situation, make a decision, give a combat order, and keep control over its implementation.

Varentsov and Serov have assessed the situation. But what's next? Where's the solution?

The situation is clear. Khrushchev set the goal of launching a man into space in December 1960. It's October. Man's flight into space will be proof of the Soviet Union's indestructible rocket power. As soon as man flies, Khrushchev will start scaring Europe and America with missiles, demanding a solution to the Berlin problem.
There are missiles to destroy Europe, but no missiles to destroy America. We're going to have a heated conversation and, uh. it could end very badly for everyone. Bluffing without trump cards is suicide. This isn't a game of dumbass. This could turn into World War III.

— What if we warned the Americans that Khrushchev was bluffing, that we didn't have such missiles in our combat units that could reach America?

— How will you warn them? Go and say, "Don't believe Khrushchev"? But why should they believe you and not him?

— There is only one way out: to provide the Americans with information, but information that they could check and make sure that we are not lying.

— How do we get this information them? How do you get it to them so that they believe it?

— Again, we have only one way out: our officer will allow himself to be recruited by American intelligence and pass secrets to them, and let them check.

— What kind of officer would go for that?

— We have to look for it.

Key point

The incredible degree of secrecy that surrounded literally every sphere of life in the Soviet Union, combined with an equally incredible degree of ostentation, gave the effect of a mirror that had been distorted three times. The leaders themselves had an erroneous view of the real state of affairs. In those years, both the Soviet people and the world saw a mighty power that was capable of launching the world's first artificial satellite, delivering to the Moon a pennant bearing the emblem of the Soviet Union, making the world's first orbit of the Moon and photographing its back, invisible side. The rocket and space power of the Soviet Union was both frightening and mesmerizing.

At present, the top leadership of the Russian Armed Forces is forced to admit that in January 1961, the Soviet leadership had at its disposal one missile capable of reaching America. It was Korolev's product 8K74 at the Angara facility - Plesetsk test site, site 151-1 ("Krasnaya Zvezda," February 16, 2001). But this single missile was never on combat duty.

The degree of reliability, protection and combat readiness of the 8K74 for strategic tasks in a general nuclear war was considered unsatisfactory. That is why Yangel's 8K64 was developed and tested in such a hurry. That is why Yangel, contrary to instructions and prohibitions, ordered to repair the missile's electrical circuits without draining the oxidizer and fuel.

G L A V A 8.

1

Next to the office of the GRU chief, Army General Serov, is a large workroom. It is good because it has long, wide tables on which you can spread maps of any size. Today the tables are piled with folders with personal files of GRU officers. Army General Serov has a job that cannot be entrusted to his deputies, assistants or adjutants.

All night, day, and another night, bracing himself with coffee servings, the general went through the folders, putting aside first two dozen, selecting five of them, and finally leaving only one.

So, we have a candidate. Colonel Oleg Vladimirovich Penkovsky of the GRU. A career artilleryman. Graduated from military school. At 20 - the first war, the terrible war with Finland. Soon after it - the war with Germany. At 25 - commander of the 51st Guards fighter-antitank artillery regiment. Simply put, a suicide bomber. Anti-tank artillery are those guys with guns who are put in the way of a tank wedge that has broken through. Penkovsky survived. Chest in the orders: Alexander Nevsky, two Red Banner, Patriotic War of the first degree, Red Star. After the war - two military academies. Including the top secret Military Diplomatic Academy, the GRU cadre forge. At 31, he was a colonel. He worked abroad, in a very responsible position - GRU resident in Turkey. That's a general's position.
The official cover is military attaché. This is also a general's position. Penkovsky simultaneously held two general positions, worked for two generals, but remained a colonel. He was stuck in the rank of colonel for ten years. In the war would have long been a general, but in peacetime, such people are rarely given the go: he does not adjust to the bosses, too staunchly defends his opinion. Such only to war, only there they reveal their abilities fully. That's the only place they want to go. That's where they go.

2

A task of extreme difficulty to find a man who could warn America.... Oh, no! Not America! To warn planet Earth of the danger ahead. The danger is not that Khrushchev has a lot of missiles, the danger is that Khrushchev did not have missiles capable of hitting America at that moment! Because he didn't any, the hapless Khrushchev decided to play with inflatable muscles. He decided to bluff. And this is a threat to everyone. It's a threat to the life of the planet.

So did GRU chief Army General Serov have a hard time finding a man who would give his despicable life to save humanity?

I dare say it's difficult.

It's easy to go to your death when the whole company sees your suicidal deed. It is easy to go to death when the whole company sees your suicidal feat. And the head of the GRU, Army General Serov Ivan Alexandrovich, had to find such a person who would dare to go on a suicidal feat that no one should ever know about.

There are plenty of people who want to immortalize their name. But not everyone is ready to give his life and perform a feat that no one should know about. Moreover, there is not only the threat of death. In case of failure, the man who saves the planet from destruction will be declared a traitor and will disgrace his name forever.

So they decided as follows: the head of the GRU, Army General Serov Ivan Aleksandrovich, is looking for a suitable person, and the commander of the missile forces and artillery of the Ground Forces, Chief Marshal of Artillery Sergei Sergeevich Varentsov, is also looking. Then they will meet, each present his candidate, and the two of them will choose the best one.

Serov chose his, Varentsov chose his.

And now they've met. Each of them has a folder with a file in his hand.

Serov explained that the best for this case would be Penkovsky Oleg Vladimirovich: a front-line soldier, repelled attacks "Panthers" and "Tigers", resisted, after the war got into military intelligence, showed himself with the best side, worked abroad, in Turkey, a country with a very difficult agent situation, was a colonel, but coped simultaneously with two general positions, personally brave, principled, does not abuse alcohol, an exemplary family man. The main thing is a soldier who will not hesitate to go into battle and to death, if it is required by military duty. And who do you have?

Chief Marshal of Artillery Varentsov opened his folder:

— My candidate is not worse than yours, I know him personally since the war, he is also a colonel,
also from the anti-tank artillery, his name is the same - Penkovsky Oleg Vladimirovich.

3

In 1960, a special commission looked through the personal files of three and a half thousand fighter pilots of the Air Force, Air Defense Forces and Navy. Out of these thousands, 347 candidates were filtered out. With each conducted serious work. The very first

the conversation started with a question:

— Would you like to fly new ?

— Which ?

— On the new ones.

— What are the altitudes and speeds?

— Altitudes are high. So are the speeds.

And what fighter pilot doesn't like to fly fast?

After the second filter, 12 people remained. This team was named "Air Force Group No. 1." From this

group six people were singled out. And of them - the first three: Gagarin, Nelyubov, Titov.

Out of the three, one was chosen.

This was roughly how the chief of the GRU, Army General Serov, worked that year. At first there were many folders, then fewer and fewer, until there was only one left. And the conversation with Colonel Penkovsky began with approximately the same question:

— Would you like to take part in an intelligence operation of special importance, unthinkable complexity and deadly risk?

— Yes.

— Are you ready?

— I'm ready.

— I need a volunteer. You, Colonel, have the right to refuse this mission at any time. Here's the deal. In the near future, the Soviet Union will launch a spaceship with a man on board. And it could be the beginning of the end. The end of humanity. The economic system of the Soviet Union cannot compete with that of the West. Sooner or later - sooner, I think - the Soviet Union will collapse. Our rulers' only hope is to trade resources.

— But to trade resources is to trade the Motherland!

— That's right. Colonel, I see that you have not forgotten the precepts of Comrade Stalin. Stalin said so: to trade in resources is to trade in the Motherland. But Khrushchev has forgotten these precepts. To be more precise, he never shared this point of view. Khrushchev decided to trade resources, that is, the Motherland. The Soviet Union began building the most powerful pipeline system in the world to pump out our oil. I will say more: Khrushchev intends to sell Russian oil for American dollars.

— This can't be happening! It's not true.

— Unfortunately, Colonel, it's true.

— But why dollars? Let them bring their goods to us, we will tax them at the border, let them sell the best they have. Let them earn rubles and use them to buy our oil.

— That's right, but it was easier for Khrushchev to sell for American money. The problem is that no matter how much he earned, our system is set up in such a way that people flee from us to the West, but they don't flee from the West to us.
The main hole through which they are fleeing is West Berlin. If you look more broadly, West Germany. Now the first man will fly into space, and Khrushchev will launch a diplomatic and political offensive to solve the problem of Berlin and, in general, the problem of Germany. The diplomatic and political offensive could turn into a military offensive. Simply put, into World War III. The worst part is that Khrushchev is bluffing.

— What if we warn the Americans?

— That's what I'm talking about. If you can do it, Colonel, I'll guarantee you a general's lapel pin.

— Double play?

— Yes, Colonel.

— With all that entails?

— That's right.

Penkovsky responded the way Captain Mentyukov, who had recently responded to the Su-9 without a compensating suit, who had gone for a ramming in the stratosphere:

— In case of emergency, don't forget your wife and daughter.

— It will be done. I'm taking the risk with you, Colonel. If something happens to me, our glorious system called GRU will not forget you or me.

4

Serov and Penkovsky together identified the diplomat they needed. There was no doubt that he was an intelligence officer. From what country? Let's say from one of the Western NATO member countries. He should have been given material, the value of which would immediately, definitively and irrevocably dispel all doubts. He had to reveal a secret that was no joke.

On November 7, 1960, two weeks after the death of the Commander-in-Chief of the Strategic Missile Forces, Chief Marshal of Artillery Nedelin, and a group of missileers, Penkovsky met this diplomat at a reception in honor of the 43rd anniversary of the Great October Socialist Revolution.

Once alone, I slipped him a bag with a tight stack of documents:

— Tell the U.S. government.

5

The Western diplomat took a risk, but not a big one. Diplomatic immunity, you know. Vienna Convention of 1815. A diplomat can't be arrested. He can't be searched. But if he is arrested by mistake, he must be released immediately. If you don't like his behavior, expel him from the country. But you dare not detain him, let alone search him.

Serov and Penkovsky had calculated on this: to hand it over instantly without any unnecessary words and walk away. Then in a couple of weeks they would meet me and ask: how was the present?

You don't have to ask that question. When any diplomat receives ***such a*** package and sends it to the authorities, he will immediately be ordered to find the person who sent such an important message. And make contact. And to ask the transmitter to somehow travel outside the Soviet Union. For a serious conversation on safe territory.

If a diplomat risked anything, it was only until he entered the walls of his home embassy. The embassy — is a piece of another country in Moscow. The embassy is inviolable. An attack on the embassy is an attack on the country itself. With all that entails.

Once the document has arrived at the embassy, the only thing left to do is to pack it in the diplomatic baggage. Do not think that documents of special importance are sent in envelopes. Not at all. They will remain in the vaults of the intelligence organization that operates under the cover of the embassy. These vaults are special. They're located in concrete bunkers. In case of danger, you blow the fuse and everything inside will burn up in an oxygen jet, leaving not even ashes.

To send important documents to intelligence agencies, the documents will be shot on a special film with a special developing recipe. If an unauthorized person tries to develop it, the image will be lost. The undeveloped films are placed in a special container with acid. The container is small enough to fit in a briefcase, and the briefcase is strapped to the arm of the diplomatic courier.

Diplomatic couriers and their luggage are also inviolable. An attack on a diplomatic courier is tantamount to an attack on an ambassador, that is, on the country he represents. Among other things, diplomatic couriers are armed. They can fight back against attackers. That is their right and privilege. Besides, if there is a threat to the cargo, the courier has only to press a button and the acid inside the container will destroy the tapes. In the meantime, the documents themselves will be stored in the embassy vaults. If there are doubts about the authenticity of the documents received, the easiest thing to do is to send experts to the embassy and they will confirm or dispel the doubts on the spot.

So, the diplomat who received the package only needs to go to the embassy..... And

hand over the document.

We'll let the brass handle it.

But he didn't take the packet to the embassy. He brought the packet home. The next day, he carried it with him. Then another week. And another.

Two weeks later, Penkovsky's question: How was the present? And the cautious diplomat's reply: I'm not a spy, you know. Take your papers.

6

That was the end of the work.

A diplomat could have left his briefcase with documents in a cab. Or on a bench in the park. And our people are vigilant. They would have taken the envelope to the right place. And that's a death sentence for the conspirators: Serov and Penkovsky. Chief Marshal of Artillery Varentsov would have been exposed. Documents were of such caliber that those who have access to them, can be counted on the fingers of one hand. They would have found them all. And quickly.

— What shall we do, Comrade Colonel?

— We'll try, Comrade General of the Army.

7

The death of the Commander-in-Chief of the Strategic Missile Forces, Chief Marshal of Artillery Nedelin, on October 24, 1960, confused the cards for many. Including rocket scientists. The launch of a man into space was postponed from December to January, then to February, then to March.

The leaders of the Armed Forces of the Soviet Union never concealed the fact that GRU Colonel Oleg Penkovsky acted not on his own initiative, but on the orders of his superiors.
"Military History Journal," an organ of the Russian Ministry of Defense (1992, No. 8, p. 69) reports:

Penkovsky was given the task, under the guise of an employee of the State Scientific and Technical Committee, to gain the confidence of the Moscow agents of American or British intelligence.

The newspaper "Krasnaya Zvezda", the Central Organ of the Ministry of Defense of the Russian Federation, January 29, 1997 specifies who exactly gave Penkovsky such a task - the head of the Main Intelligence Directorate of the General Staff, Hero of the Soviet Union, Army General Serov Ivan Alexandrovich:

And it was he who introduced Penkovsky into the State Committee for Science and Technology with a more than strange assignment under the guise of an employee of the Department of External Relations to gain the confidence of Moscow agents of American or British intelligence.

G L A V A 9.

1

On January 20, 1961, John Fitzgerald Kennedy took the oath of office and assumed the office of President of the United States. In his inaugural address, the new president addressed the Soviet Union, "Let us explore space together.... "

At that time, the Soviet Union had already launched the world's first artificial satellite, was the first to deliver a pennant with the coat of arms of the Soviet Union to the Moon, was the first to fly around the Moon and deliver images of its invisible back side to Earth. The Soviet Union was preparing to launch the world's first man into outer space. These words of the new U.S. president were immediately reported to Khrushchev. The latter only grinned crookedly. Of course, the call went unanswered.

2

On March 23, 1961, cosmonaut Valentin Bondarenko died during training. The guy was only 23 years old. This, understandably, was not reported by the press. At that time, the final date of the first human space flight was set - April 1961.

3

Yuri Alekseevich was packed into a spacesuit. The helmet is white, the space suit is orange, the boots are black. It's beautiful.

You should always look at a work of art after it's finished. Maybe at the last moment you will notice any omissions.

They examined the man: handsome! That's it. Ready. Fly!

— Stop! - Chief Designer Korolev shouts. - Stop.

— What's , Sergei Palych?

— You can't send a man into space like that!

— Why can't you?

— Look at him! What does he look like?

— Like who? The first astronaut of planet Earth!

— No shit! Not a year later, our glorious anti-aircraft gunners shot down an American U-2 reconnaissance plane with their first missile. Pilot-spy Powers was caught, tried and imprisoned. So, our world's first cosmonaut in his orange outfit can't be distinguished from an American spy pilot. He will land by parachute, and drunken men will lift him on a pitchfork in patriotic ecstasy.

— Oh, wow. It's true. I should put a red star on my helmet right away.

— How are you gonna attach it?

— Draw!

— The painter! Get the painter over here!

Where can you find an artist at a spaceport before a man's flight into space, before the very first flight in the world, right before the launch, when everything is ready? There is no place for artists!

But we do. When they want to.

At once the artist was almost dragged by the hair: here he was, the bastard, warming himself in the wardroom!

Sergey Palych looked at the artist with an appraising glance: some kind of plump. Well, all right. As it .

— Where are the paints?

— There they are!

— Brushes?

— With me.

— Go on, paint a star on your helmet right now! Hurry up, it's time for the man to fly to the stars.

— won't.

— " won't" what?

— I 't draw.

— I'll give you: I wont! I'll show you Kuzkin's mother! Why won't you?

— A man is going into space. The very first! His photo will be admired by descendants on all continents for centuries and millennia. And on his spacesuit - a crooked star! An artist cannot draw a star clearly without a stencil right on the helmet, which is already on the man and therefore moving, without a stencil. He can't!

— Yeah. Business.

— What if you spell it Sa-Se-Sir?

— Write!

4

Anyone who suffers from claustrophobia should not sign up to be an astronaut.

Senior Lieutenant Gagarin was swaddled in the ejection seat like a dead pharaoh's mummy. They trapped him, as if in a prison, in an indestructible balloon, locked him in - there was no way out. In this position to wait until the preparation for the launch is completed. If it rumbles, that's it. And it can very well rumble. Not even half a year has passed since right here, on the 41st site, on October 24, 1960, 13 minutes before the first launch, our newest intercontinental ballistic missile Izdeliye 8K64 burned up.

Something for the senior lieutenant to think about. Chief Designer Korolev has already launched seven such balloons into space, but without a man on board.

The first ship completed the flight program, but instead of descending to earth, it went upward - into a higher orbit. If it happens today, death in the icy void will be long and agonizing. In this case, Gagarin has a PM, a Makarov pistol.

The second ship, with two dogs instead of one man, rumbled on takeoff. 41 seconds into the flight. That's the best case scenario. It's instant death without the agony.

The third went into space and returned safely. The passengers are two dogs. Squirrel and Strelka. The

fourth with two dogs exploded in the 115th second of the flight.

The fifth took off almost into space, but didn't make it into orbit. It landed in the wrong place. The catapult didn't work. The dogs endured tremendous stress and a hard landing. But miraculously, they survived. A man could not have survived under such loads and such a landing.

The sixth with a mannequin named Ivan Ivanovich and the dog Chernushka flew in without problems. Ivan Ivanovich was ejected at the specified altitude. The parachute hung on a tree, scaring three neighboring villages: again an American spy was shot down, hanging on a tree, not fluttering! And it was clear to the designers that if Ivanovich had been alive and not stuffed with sawdust, he would have maneuvered in the air, would not have hung on the tree, and everything would have been fine.

The seventh ship with the same Ivan and the dog Zvezdochka also returned safely from space.

And the eighth instead of a dog and will fly senior lieutenant Gagarin. Dog work in the truest sense.

Knowing that the options could be very different, the leaders of the Soviet Union prepared three different statements at once.

The first is a triumph: hurrah, man in space!

The second is the Soviet government's appeal to the governments of all countries to provide aid and assistance in the search and rescue of the world's first cosmonaut.

The third is mournful: while attempting the first flight into space... citizen of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics Senior Lieutenant Gagarin Yuri Alexeyevich.... Bright memory will forever remain in our hearts.

And to Gagarin himself two days before the launch... So that it's not at the last moment: write a letter to your wife Valentina, brother.... If you die, it'll be the last news from you. And write a letter to your mother.

The understudies were not forgotten either. At the same time with Gagarin, German Titov was dressed in the same orange suit. He was also urgently written "USSR" on his helmet. He was taken in the same bus to the launch. He will sit in the bunker until the rocket takes off. If at the last moment something happens to Gagarin, Titov is immediately ready for the flight. That's why he was also given an opportunity two days before the launch.

to write a farewell letter to his wife and mother.

The second understudy Grigory Nelyubov is not packed in a jumpsuit. But he's here too. If something happens to both Gagarin and Titov, the launch will be postponed for six hours. And Nelyubov will be the first to fly into space. That's why he said goodbye to his family and friends in advance. All three envelopes were sealed and locked in the safe of Colonel-General of Aviation Kamanin, Deputy Commander-in-Chief of the Air Force for Cosmonautics.

And now Gagarin is locked in the descent vehicle. Preparations for the launch continue.

The clock is ticking. Senior Lieutenant Gagarin is waiting. And they are ticking. From time to time with him speaks chief designer Korolev Sergei Pavlovich:

— "Cedar, I'm Dawn One. How you feeling?

— "Dawn, I'm Cedar. I feel good.

Silence and silence again. It could go off. At any moment. A heavy ball fallthe ground from a great height into the roaring flames of rocket fuel.

And, warding off silly worries, the senior lieutenant purrs a fancy song:

Lily of the

valley, the valley,

Light May

greetings, Lily of

the valley,

lilythe - White

bouquet.

Then moves on to the folk version:

We'll get into the

reeds, well get

drunk,

What the fuck do we need these the ...

Every breath of an astronaut is recorded. This is invaluable material, which will later be processed by entire scientific institutes. And planet Earth reminds its son of this:

— "Cedar, I'm Dawn One. I hear you loud and

clear. Oh, yeah. We're recording.

— "Dawn, I'm Cedar. Roger that.

And again the tedious, exhausting wait for a possible catastrophe: 13 minutes before liftoff or at the 41st second of flight. The official, experimentally determined reliability of the system is just under 43%.

Then there was Gagarin's immortal "Let's go...".

The Soviet cosmonauts used to sing the folk song "Let's get into the reeds" before every launch.

5

Khrushchev to the Minister of Defense Marshal of the Soviet Union Malinovsky in the tube:

— Rodion Yaklich, can you hear me?

— I hear you, Nikit Sergeyich, hello!

— Rodion Yaklich, the guy's flying!

— It's flying, Nikit Sergeyich!

— Why lieutenant major?

— What should he be?

— Think about it! The first! In space!

— Well, I'll make him captain!

— Who the fuck is the captain!

— All right. Make him a major. I'll sign the order now.

— What a bastard you are, Rodion

Yaklich. And Levitan is on the air:

— Moscow speaks. Moscow is speaking. All radio stations of the Soviet Union are working! Moscow time is 10 hours and 2 minutes. We are transmitting a message about the world's first human space flight. On April 12, 1961, the Soviet Union launched the world's first satellite spacecraft into orbit around the Earth.
"Vostok" with a man on board. The pilot-cosmonaut of the Vostok satellite spacecraft is a citizen of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, pilot Major Gagarin Yuri Alexeyevich...

And to him in orbit at 10 hours 18 minutes Captain V.I. Khoroshilov openly text:

— "Cedar", I'm "Vesna". Comrade Major, how are you feeling?

There no response. That was the end of the connection with the spaceship.

6

Chief Designer of rocket and space systems Korolev Sergei Pavlovich sits at the table with his head down. The desolation is total and absolute. The ship was supposed to enter orbit at an altitude of 230 kilometers, it was carried to 327. That's not a catastrophe. It's something close to it. Clearly, it's not going to land at its intended point. That's okay. We'll find it. Just make sure it's headed toward the ground during deceleration, not backwards.
As long as it doesn't go the other way. And then land. Just make sure it lands. An ocean of

excitement behind us. Oceans ahead.

7

The ball started spinning in all planes at once. The major was spinning like an American washing machine at an exhibition in Sokolniki. His arms and legs were poured not with lead, but with uranium weight, the light in his eyes faded, his head almost weighs a ton, like a stone core from the Tsar's cannon. I was afraid it would tear off.

Suddenly I felt better. Suddenly there was a whistle and burgundy flame behind the porthole curtain. The curtain was closed, but the maroon glow still shone through the edges. The balloon is flying, like a star that has fallen from the sky. It must look beautiful from the outside. The charges knocked out the hatch cover, the catapult rumbled, the major flew out of the spaceship like a cork from a champagne bottle. With a rustle, the orange dome, like himself, unfolded above him, slammed down, filled with air, shook the major.

And the planet opened its arms.

G L A V A 10.

1

Khrushchev to the chief designer Korolev in the tube:

— Well done! Well done! When do we send the next one?

— August.

— What program?

— We can make one turn, like today. Then it would land in the Soviet Union, roughly where it took off. Or a 24-hour flight. Then after 17 revolutions it will be in the same place as after one revolution.

— Give me 24 hours! Give me 17 revolutions!

2

The British diplomat could not contain his admiration:

— Where did you find such a guy? With such a proletarian biography, such an aristocratic princely surname, such a Hollywood smile?

Instead of answering, a representative of the State Committee for Science and Technology under the USSR Council of Ministers, citizen Penkovsky, shoved a tight package at him:

— Tell Her Majesty's Government.

In the packet, besides a bundle of documents, was a note: "Meeting in London. April 20. 18:00. From the entrance to Lancaster Gate tube station I walk clockwise around the Lancaster Hotel. Let the meeting person walk in the opposite direction. His general signs: green hat, glasses, umbrella in left hand. The exact sign: a ring with a blue stone on his right hand. Have him follow me. Backup meeting under the same conditions the next day. Alex."

3

Two and a half years later, on September 20, 1963, speaking at a meeting of the United Nations General Assembly, U.S. President John F. Kennedy reiterated, "Why should the first human mission to the Moon be a matter of interstate competition? Why should the United States and the Soviet Union, in preparing such an expedition, duplicate research, design effort and expense?" Kennedy proposed sending to the moon "not representatives of any one nation, but representatives of both our countries."

Khrushchev had only to agree, and the primacy in space would forever remain with the Soviet Union. In September 1963, the Soviet Union remained the undisputed leader of the space race. Among the Soviet victories were now not only the first artificial satellite, not only the flight of an unmanned vehicle around the Moon, which transmitted images of its back side, but also the flight of Gagarin - the first man in space, the flight of Titov - the world's first human space flight lasting more than a day, the flight of Nikolaev and Popovich - the world's first group flight of two spacecraft. Finally, in the summer of 1963, there was another simultaneous flight of two spacecraft: Vostok-5 (cosmonaut Bykovsky) and Vostok-6 (Valentina Tereshkova, the first woman in space).

There was nothing like it in America at that moment. But America wasted no time, America was rapidly making up for lost time. Khrushchev should have accepted the American president's proposal and prepared a joint flight to the Moon. And it would have been clear to everyone: of course, the flight would be joint, but it is clear that the Soviet Union made a greater contribution - what achievements it had! Look how far ahead it was!

Sergei Pavlovich Korolev, chief designer of rocket and space systems, persuaded Khrushchev to accept America's offer.

Khrushchev retorted: "I will not give the Moon to the capitalists."

Khrushchev lived in a world of illusions. Experts presented him with the balance of power: the Americans were behind, but they would soon catch up. And overtake them. But Khrushchev believed in the advantages of socialism. We'll overtake! We'll overtake! We'll win!

There was nothing to win. Everything that could be squeezed out of Korolev's R-7 rocket had been squeezed out. And the Soviet Union did not yet have another, more powerful rocket.

The first artificial satellite was put into orbit on October 4, 1957. A month later, on November 3, the second artificial satellite entered orbit. And four days later, on November 7, 1957, a great holiday - 40 years of the Great October Socialist Revolution.

Ten years had passed. A new and very round date was approaching - November 7, 1967, 50 years of communist rule in the Soviet Union. The world froze in joyful anticipation: now the Russians would definitely fly to the Moon!

The anticipation was intense, universal, understandable. Articles appeared in Western scientific journals with predictions of what it would all look like. After all, the Soviet Union had never made public its plans to conquer space. All accomplishments were sudden and always for holidays. The Communists cannot celebrate 50 years of their revolution with a grandiose accomplishment. They're obviously preparing something. The world is waiting for a surprise.

And TASS was forced to say: don't expect surprises, citizens, we will not launch anything for the holiday.

The statement was correct. Otherwise, deceived expectations could have resulted in a flood of gossip and fantastic assumptions about the reasons for the delay.

In the meantime. Already since 1960, the United States had been developing projects for the Saturn rocket. On January 10, 1962, plans were published to create the most powerful rocket in the history of mankind, Saturn-5, capable of launching 140 tons of payload into Earth orbit or 41 tons into near-lunar orbit.

On November 7 and 8, 1967, the Soviet people and all progressive mankind celebrated the 50th anniversary of the Great October Revolution. And on November 9, the Americans launched the first Saturn-5. The launch was a success.

The Soviet Union was secretly building its own missile of approximately the same size and characteristics. It was called the N-1 Raskat missile. Four launches of such missiles were conducted. All four launches of the N-1 Raskat missile were unsuccessful. The degree of unreliability is 100%.

Meanwhile, both the rocket itself and its engines were the height of perfection. The problem was the rush and lack of funds. It was necessary to build gigantic stands for ground tests. For a rocket of such size, these stands could only be of cyclopean size and inconceivable cost. So they decided to do without them... They decided to work everything out during test launches. We chased economy. It turned out to be more expensive.

The Americans went the other way. They built the stands. It cost a lot of money. But everything was worked out on the ground.

13 Saturn-5 rockets were sent into space. All launches were successful. The degree of reliability is 100%. The Americans used these rockets to fly to the Moon, which Khrushchev did not want to give to them for anything.

But that was later. And we will return to the spring of the victorious 1961. When during the reception in the Kremlin on the occasion of the first human space flight, Nikita Khrushchev, who was already well drunk, broadcasted to the Soviet people and the world: Yurka from space saw exactly who was sharpening axes on us! But we to them...

At these words the operators of the All-Union Radio played Tchaikovsky's music at full power.

4

A turnout and a safe house are different things.

In GRU terminology, a turnabout is a conspiratorial meeting of intelligence officers or agents who do not know each other.

The easiest place to meet is at a safe house: you have recruited a person and now use his apartment or part of it for secret meetings. What's simpler: memorize the address, make a good check to see if there's a tail, and press the bell. even quite simple: here is the key....

But a safe house is good for counterintelligence. They gave the snitch an address, a schedule of meetings, and let him report on Thursdays at the safe house, so that he would not glimpse and shine near the regional KGB department.

A safe house is also good for reconnaissance, but only if we are working on our own or neutral territory.

But if we're working on enemy soil, a safe house is not going to work out well for us. One day it will be spotted by the cheerful guys from the local counter-intelligence service, they will set up a post in the neighboring apartment and spend years eavesdropping, or even peeking through the hole.

That's why intelligence on enemy soil does not use safe houses, but turnouts.

The turnout is selected in advance and used only once. Every GRU extraction officer, once abroad, begins to set up his theater of operations. First of all, he has to find routes of inspection. It is necessary to have a lot of them. Each of them - at least four hours with a dozen checkpoints. It's not easy: stand at the mirror window and see who follows you out. No, it's much more serious than that. Each place must provide an opportunity not only to make sure that the fidgety ones are not following you, but also to be checked at ease - to be checked easily, elegantly, without arousing suspicion, without showing even the experienced spies that you are a professional, that you are being checked.

Routes should be legendized: not just in the alleys, but with such and such a purpose, and this purpose should look quite convincing.

You can't use the same routes and inspection sites. You'll get burned by repetition.

Once you've chosen your routes, start looking for places of signals, hiding places, encounters and turnouts. And not just for yourself. For the deputy resident, for the resident, for the head of the section, direction, department, Main Department.

You find a place, describe it: "Top secret. "Horizon-5." Place. Time. General signs. Exact sign. Password... Feedback... "

All this is sent to the addressees and stored somewhere. Suddenly the head of the direction needed a place of graphic signal in Milan - he opens the safe and chooses one option out of a possible hundred. After that a red cross is put on the description. Never again will this place be used for signaling. Every boss has plenty of meeting places, inspection routes, turnouts for every case. You need a short-term stash in Marseilles? Here's a description of the location. Need a long-term stash in the mountains of Norway? No problem.

Every intelligence chief has options for many years ahead. The head of the GRU, Army General Serov, needed to organize a turnout in London. To do this, all he has to do is open a huge safe. These are small-sized hiding places, these are large-sized ones, these are places of signals, and these are turnouts. Here's a good one - Little Bear 41. What's good about it? Because it's geo-referenced: it's a subway station.
"Lancaster Gate. There's only one way out of here. You can't go wrong. There's one huge building on the whole block, a hotel
"The Lancaster. It's almost the center of London, but it's never crowded. If our man walks clockwise from the entrance and the person who is supposed to meet him walks , they will see each other. They both don't have to stand still and wait. If they don't meet on the first lap, there's a second lap....

There is no illegal intelligence department in the GRU. Each chief of direction and department leads several legal and illegal residencies. The most important illegal residencies are run by the GRU chief personally. For this purpose he has a group of assistants.

In the Penkovsky case, no one could help the chief of the GRU, Army General Serov Ivan Alexandrovich. He developed the operations himself, using Colonel Penkovsky both as an advisor and as an executor.

So, Lancaster. Unless the British are as cautious as that diplomat in Moscow.

5

Citizen Penkovsky showed up at exactly 6:00 p.m. Clockwise from the exit. No one on the sidewalk. And on the opposite side of the street - also empty. Turned the corner, no one. Turned another corner. A lone passerby came towards him: a green hat, glasses, an umbrella in his left hand. Penkovsky passed by, stopped at the corner, as if pondering whether I was going to the right place. He turned back. He wandered towards Paddington Station. A green hat flashed across the street, its owner following. Keeping his distance. Paddington Station is two blocks from the hotel, but it's a different environment. Paddington is the world's first train station. Paddington is one of the wonders of the 19th century. From here Brunel, the greatest engineer of all time, laid the railroad to Bristol. The road was astonishing in its length. That's why it was called the Great Western. And in Bristol, Brunel built the world's first metal suspension bridge, connecting two rocks of a powerful canyon. And he also built the world's first transoceanic liner "Great Britannia": go to London's Paddington Station, get on the train, and in Bristol a liner with a huge black tube and triangular sails on seven masts awaits you - a direct route from London to New York.

So that's not all. From Paddington, the world's first subway line, Paddington to Farington. Seven stations. 1864. Paddington's been a whirlwind of people ever since. The hero of children's books, the bear without a name, started his journeys here. And they named him Paddington. Paddington Station has a gallery of stores with bears named Paddington. Someone who once picked up a turnout in London outside the Lancaster Hotel named it
"Little Bear", alluding to its proximity to Paddington Station.

The location was chosen with knowledge and, I would say, taste. There's almost always no one at the point of contact. It's easy to spot last-minute surveillance. And it's just as easy to spot the person you're meeting. But next door is bustling London, with a thousand taverns, stores, grand hotels and innumerable small inns with five to seven rooms. There's a lot to see in Paddington. And there is something to explain your arrival here: it is a sin to be in London without seeing Paddington.

Also, the good thing about this place is that it's so easy to get lost.

6

The meeting is very short. But apart from the main signs, visible from afar, there should be a very small one that convinces you that this is the right person.

At the kiosk, a gentleman in a green hat took the teddy bear in his hand, evaluated it, turned it around in the light. It sparkled

a ring with a blue stone. Penkovsky,

looking away:

— Mount Royal Hotel, room 413.

— Can you do it today?

— I can do it after ten.

7

The delegation of the USSR State Committee for Science and Technology chose Mount Royal. That's why it's the most convenient place to hold an agent's meeting. Obviously not in Penkovsky's room. It's best to rent another room in the same corridor. If Penkovsky has to go somewhere, his delegation comrades may ask: Where are you going at night? And so: I'm here, I didn't go anywhere, and my coat is dry.

Four Brits. They introduced themselves: John, David, Graham, Bob. They gave their last names. But Penkovsky didn't even try to memorize them and didn't question them. Obviously, they couldn't be real anyway.

I realized from the pronunciation that there were two Brits and the other two were Americans.

All four thanked Penkovsky for copies of the documents. Next question: Why did Penkovsky decide to take such a step?

The answer was simple and expected: money is needed. Gagarin's

flight - April 12, 1961.

Everyone who followed the pulse of the planet clearly understood: now Khrushchev would immediately demand a solution to the Berlin problem in favor of the Soviet Union.

That's what happened. The planet rejoiced. In the slums of Rio de Janeiro and in the remote villages of Nepal, mothers gave their newborn sons the name Yuri.

The news of a man's flight into space shook the planet. Gagarin's portraits were printed on postage stamps of dozens of countries. Under this jubilant clamor, Nikita Khrushchev issued an ultimatum on the issue of Berlin. This was the starting point of the Berlin and then the Cuban Missile Crisis. The world began to slide toward World War III.

For Khrushchev, everything was working out wonderfully. On April 16, 1961, Fidel Castro made a public statement about the socialist character of the Cuban revolution.

On April 20, a landing force of counter-revolutionaries was landed on the island of Cuba in the Bay of Pigs. They were preparing for heavy fighting. They were expecting dense machine-gun fire. But the Cuban army was rearmed by the Soviet Union. We don't spare weapons for our little brothers in class. Not dense machine gun fire met the counter-revolutionaries, but volleys of BM-13 rocket launchers, heavy fire from 152-mm howitzer-cannons
ML-20, each shell weighing 44 kilograms, and immediately attacked by T-34-85 tanks supported by Su-100 self-propelled guns. The defeat was swift, decisive and complete.

But in these days another event also happened. On April 20, 1961, Colonel Penkovsky had his first detailed conversation with representatives of British intelligence in London.

So much for eight days:

• the first man's flight into space;

• the first state in the western hemisphere to turn to the path of socialist development, as officially announced;

• the attempt to strangle socialist Cuba by force of arms was successfully repulsed;

• Colonel Penkovsky's first conversation with British intelligence.

Some may think that these are mere coincidences in time. But we will pay attention to the sequence of events and try to catch the logic.

In order to finally delve into the logic and evaluate it, one must know that the first conversation with British intelligence was preceded by an instant meeting between Penkovsky and a British diplomat in Moscow on the day of the first human space flight. Yes, yes, that very day, April 12, 1961.

G L A V A 11.

1

What Penkovsky reported amused the British but alarmed, angered, infuriated and offended the Americans.

Already during World War I, Great Britain, once the "Lord of the Seas" and the world's most powerful economy, was pushed out of first place by America. After World War II, the Soviet Union, with its missiles and bombs, joined the ranks of the superpowers. And World War II-beaten Germany and Japan rose quickly after the defeat. Unencumbered by huge arms expenditures, they raised their economies to such a level that they displaced Britain in world markets. If Soviet propaganda is to be believed, Britain was finally and irrevocably relegated from the heights of world leadership in both economic and military affairs. And if Russian Colonel Penkovsky is to be believed, then Britain's performance against the backdrop of bluff Soviet power is not so sad at all....

But the same information doesn't sit well with Americans. How could they? The Soviet Union doesn't have enough missiles? All right, let's believe it. What do we get?

American politicians, generals, industrialists, and bankers were so happy when Khrushchev banged his shoe at the UN or remembered someone's mother. To this clatter, to these hysterical cries, America was building up its striking power. Khrushchev was the main ally of the USSR's most aggressive adversaries, although he simply did not realize it.

American generals and admirals had no need to persuade Congress to shell out money for the war effort. Khrushchev did it for them. One short phrase from Khrushchev was enough to convince all doubters. And that phrase was, "We'll bury you!"

The American businessmen who made billions in arms production did not even need to advertise their products and explain to His Majesty the Taxpayer why so many weapons were needed, why they were urgently needed, and why they had to pay so much money for them. Instead of advertising and explaining, it was easier to show the people of America a chronicle - a screaming boor on the podium of the UN General Assembly.

Every year during Khrushchev's rule, America commissioned one state-of-the-art strike aircraft carrier of the type "The Forrestol. Speed, 34 knots. Not every destroyer can keep up. But each "Forrestol" has 76 thousand tons of total displacement, five thousand crewmen, 70 warplanes. Is that 70 airplanes a lot? We have a fighter aviation regiment - 40 airplanes: three squadrons of 12 airplanes and 4 airplanes in the control link. The regiment of frontline (tactical bomber regiment in Western terms) - 30 machines: three squadrons of 9 machines and 3 machines in the control link. It turned out, if we translate to our standards, that each "Forrestol" - on each "Forrestol" - two aviation regiments. The worst thing was that it took only three years from laying the keel to delivery of each Forrestol to the fleet.

In 1960, there was a hitch - the U.S. Navy did not receive a single aircraft carrier. But in the following year 1961, Uncle Sam's industry got even. The Navy received three aircraft carriers. Two of the newest types.
"Kitty Hawk," of 80,000 tons displacement each, capable of carrying 85 aircraft, and one nuclear-powered,
"Enterprise," - displacement 90,000 tons, speed 35 knots, unlimited range. And built
"The Enterprise in three and a half years. And in order not to bore him in the ocean, at the same time the world's first nuclear-powered missile cruiser "Long Beach" was introduced into the fleet - it is the defense of the aircraft carrier from aircraft, surface ships and submarines of the enemy, it is a bundle: work, nuclear-powered aircraft carrier, on long-range targets, do not fear for your safety - the nuclear-powered missile cruiser is always close by.

In 1961, the U.S. Navy received four nuclear-powered Skipjack torpedo submarines with an underwater speed of more than 30 knots. The pace of fleet construction picked up. In the same year were launched seven nuclear : four torpedo submarines, type "Thresher", and three missile submarines, type "Ethan Allen". And immediately laid 15 more: 5 torpedo, type "Thresher", and 10 missile, the newest type "Lafayette".

Nuclear-powered boats, both missile and torpedo boats, were to enter service two to two and a half years after being laid down. It was decided to keep it that way. To build them at the same pace. And along with them - cruisers, destroyers and everything else that is required to sleep well, not paying attention to the clatter of someone's heels on the podium.

New were needed for the new aircraft carriers. But even more airplanes had to be built for the Air Force. Here the range is wider: fighters, attack aircraft, transport planes, scouts, bombers, tactical and strategic, helicopters of different colors and purposes. Also
— anti-aircraft missiles. And strategic missiles. If the Russians have the advantage, we need to catch up.

And Congress took care of missile defense. The Congress took care of the missile defense, too, by pouring money into it - for over-the-horizon locators, for early warning systems, for the construction of command posts and shelters cut into granite rocks. That's how many jobs! That's how much equipment and materials! And their supply - new ! All participants in these great accomplishments will have money, and they will buy new houses
— just like they showed to the bewildered Soviet people in Sokolniki. They will buy cars and refrigerators and televisions. This means new jobs and new well-off citizens with money in their pockets and plans to buy houses, apartments and fancy toilets.

And America doesn't limit itself to building missiles, , aircraft carriers and cruisers. There's a lot more

America does everything because it believes (and wants to !) Khrushchev's threats.

But if we believe not Khrushchev, but Colonel Penkovsky, then all these Polaris, Minutemen and Titans are not needed. At least not in such quantities and so quickly. If the Russians have one nuclear submarine with three missiles, surface launch and short range, why does America need 41 nuclear submarines and 656 missiles on them, with underwater launch, and with such range and accuracy?

If Colonel Penkovsky is telling the truth, and if that truth becomes known to the people, then we will have to cut the deployment programs for all those submarines, cruisers, aircraft carriers, missiles, strategic bombers, nuclear bombs, torpedoes, artillery shells, and missile warheads. Is such a truth pleasing to the government to hear? The government demanded billions in unprecedented military expenditures to avert the threat. And the threat, it turns out, is fake! How will it make the rulers feel to admit that they were terribly wrong?

Do you, citizen readers, believe that the rulers expect intelligence to report truthfully? Don't believe it. Check it out for yourself. Here comes the mailman to your mailbox. What would you like to get from him: something nice or the truth? Oh, you'd want the pleasant truth. It doesn't work that way. The truth is always disgusting. Now put yourself in the shoes of the rulers. A scout is someone who brings news to the government. Do you think the rulers like to know the truth? They're human beings just like you. Only worse.

What was it like for American intelligence to hear Penkovsky's revelations? American intelligence drew its information mainly from Soviet newspapers. And our, such truthful newspapers admitted: yes, there are shortcomings. However, both the Soviet leaders and the press always used the word "shortcomings" only in combination with another word - "individual shortcomings". There were no problems in the Soviet Union. None at all. There were difficulties. But this word was used only in inseparable connection with another word - temporary difficulties. The insistent repetition of the same terms had a magical effect on the analysts of the American intelligence services. Besides (and this is the main thing), the military budget is a big, big and very flavorful pie. And everyone wants a bigger piece of that pie. That's why the U.S. Army, Air Force and Navy intelligence services competed.

The worst threat to America is Soviet missiles. And it's better to overestimate the threat than underestimate it. And U.S. Air Force Intelligence was overestimating. Slightly. Based on this information, the Air Force leadership argued that strategic missiles were urgently needed in huge numbers, and in underground shelters. After all, it's something like an adjustable wrench in a calloused hand: let those who bully, remember the consequences - as I knock once, and break the skull. But a missile has a terrible disadvantage: once it is launched, you can't get it back. That's why we need strategic bombers in the same quantities. An enemy can't see a missile in a silo, so he's not particularly afraid of it. And a strategic bomber is a visible threat, in addition, the bomber can be redirected at the last moment, or even returned, avoiding a nuclear catastrophe. In addition, we need an air and missile defense system. The Russians have such power!

That's right, replied American naval intelligence. But it is better to place our strategic missiles not on American soil, but in the oceans, on submarines, and bombers on aircraft carriers. In this case, the Russians will have to spend their nuclear charges not for strikes on the American continent, but on the oceans. That's why we need to build submarines and aircraft carriers.

American army intelligence agreed with this. But it added: "But we have not only America to defend, but also numerous allies in Europe and Asia. The Russians are also invading Africa. The Russians are also invading Africa, and they've started socialism in Cuba, on America's side. To protect our friends on other continents, we need tanks. The Russians have a lot of them! If we don't protect our friends, the Soviets will soon spread all over the world. They're already in Egypt and Indonesia, in Congo and Bolivia. No missiles will get them out of Algeria and Syria.
That's why - tanks! And armored personnel carriers! Howitzers, cannons and artillery tractors! And airmobile troops, infantry on helicopters. And more anti-tank means, engineering equipment, communication and troop control means.
A strategic missile is good. But it's a sledgehammer. It's not good for every job. A simple hammer can do the job. Therefore, we need tactical missiles with a range of tens and hundreds of kilometers, and nuclear charges small and super-small ....

Everyone's making their own line, and everyone's right. What do we do? Increase the budget so that there's enough for everyone. And the Russians don't stand still. The Russians were the first in the world to launch a man into space. The Russians created the world's most powerful nuclear charge. And the number of tanks is nothing to talk about: just frustration.

But if we assume for a moment that Colonel Penkovsky is right, the intelligence service will be in trouble. In the old days, a messenger brought news to the Sultan without knowing what it was. And if the news was bad, the messenger's head was chopped off. That made the Sultan feel better. For bad news that the Soviet Union is weak, the American intelligence will not cut off the head, but the budget. Against a strong Soviet Union you need strong intelligence, and why spend huge amounts of money on intelligence if the enemy is weak?

Each scout will also get it personally: why have you guys been muddying the waters for years? How can we call you all professionals after that?

Oh, it was not for nothing that an intelligence officer in Moscow refused to take Penkovsky's documents! The damned British made contact - how could they now dissociate themselves from Penkovsky's information?

The best way is to catch Penkovsky in inaccuracies, contradictions, or even lies, and stop believing him.

On April 20, 1961, at the very end of the first meeting in London, Penkovsky reported that in two or three months' time.

we should expect some very important developments in Germany - political, politico-military or purely military.

— Why is that? - the two American gentlemen couldn't believe it. - You are only a colonel, how can you know Khrushchev's plans?

— I don't know Khrushchev's plans. But I do know that the second Soviet cosmonaut is preparing to fly in the summer.

— What's the connection between Germany and the astronaut?

— Straightforward. Khrushchev will try to use the success in space on the ground.

2

The world's most thankless job is making predictions. Refrain from making predictions! If your prediction comes true, no one will remember it, no one will thank you. And if the forecast does not come true, your prediction will be remembered, you will be accused of charlatanism, ignorance, lack of professionalism.

Colonel Penkovsky was going all-in. He had to go to extreme measures in order to be believed, so he predicted some major political, diplomatic or military events in Germany in the summer of 1961.

And two American gentlemen rubbed their hands together after the meeting: Penkovsky's predictions would not come true, so they could declare him a planted duck and never believe him again.

3

Three weeks after Yuri Gagarin's space flight, on May 5, 1961, American astronaut Alan Shepard made a suborbital space flight lasting 15 minutes and 28 seconds. The Mercury spacecraft climbed to an altitude of 187 kilometers and, without entering Earth orbit, returned to earth. Or rather - on water.

At that time, it was unknown who had made the Soviet missile. But the American one was known: Wernher von Braun, a prisoner of Hitler, whose cruise and then ballistic missiles had recently destroyed London with howls and rumbles. That is why all over the world the American victory in space was somehow not perceived as purely American. And it also made the British angry: is this the one? They found a hero from Hitler's horde!

America was understandably jubilant. But the taste of bitterness lingered. Soviet Union first. America second. The difference was more than that. Gagarin's was a revolution around the Earth. Shepard's was just a spurt upward with an immediate return. Gagarin's flight lasted 108 minutes. Shepard's flight was 15 minutes.

Shepard would make up for it. Ten years later, in 1971, Alan Shepard flew to the moon as commander of a spaceship "Apollo 14. He will ride around the moon in a rover. He will take three golf balls with him and be the first to play golf on the dusty lunar paths, using an improvised tool as a club.

But that will be later. In the meantime, the superiority of the Soviet Union in the development of rocket and space technology has not been challenged by anyone. And if the Soviet Union's successes in space are so clear, obvious and impressive, then its combat missiles must be just as fearsome and perfect. Shouldn't they?

No, it'not," Colonel Penkovsky argued.

4

America's lagging behind in the first stage of the space race had a simple reason.

At the end of World War II, the United States had an overpowered navy, an equally overpowered strategic air force, and nuclear weapons. In addition, the United States had many military bases in Europe and Asia, from which, if necessary, it could deliver crushing blows to the Soviet Union. America had developed the world's best medium-range missiles, both land-based and sea-based. The United States didn't really need an intercontinental ballistic missile. Why shoot at the Soviet Union from U.S. territory, incurring a retaliatory strike, when you can do it from the territory of Great Britain, Turkey, Italy, Greece, and so on. America was working on an intercontinental missile, but there was no urgent need for it.

At the final stage of World War II, the Soviet Union had no superpowered navy, no strategic aircraft, and no nuclear weapons. Nor did it have any bases from which to strike America.

The Soviet Navy at the end of World War II did not have a single aircraft carrier. None were on the horizon. The Soviet Navy had three liners. But they were built under Tsar Nicholas. Two

They had fought the world wars, they had served their time, it was time to break them down.

At the end of the war, the Soviet Union did not have a strategic bomber. It had to copy an American B-29, which during the war made an emergency landing at a Soviet airfield after a bombing attack on Japan. The airplane was copied and named Tu-4.

However, copying means falling behind. We copy what the enemy already has. While we copy, he gets ahead. Copying takes years. Then it takes years to master production. While Tupolev was copying the B-29, America created the B-36, the biggest bomber in the history of mankind.
The strategic bomber of the previous generation B-29 was placed under its wing. The Soviet Tu-4, which was two drops similar to the B-29, could be placed under the other wing.

If there was no ocean fleet, if there was no full-fledged strategic aviation, if there were no bases from which America could be reached, then we had to look for other solutions. And there could be only one solution: the creation of an intercontinental ballistic missile.

America doesn't need it, but we do.

Such a missile was created by Korolev. It was called 8K71, variants - 8K72, 8K74 and others. This missile was not suitable for mass deployment. It was a bundle of the central and four side blocks, which could not be hidden in any shaft. The length of the rocket - 32 meters, the diameter of the "package" of first stage blocks on the air rudders - 10.3 meters. If a shaft could be built, it would require a cover weighing many thousands of tons. Each rocket required a long time to prepare for launch and a huge infrastructure, including an oxygen plant near each launch pad. The launch pad itself was a cyclopean structure, extremely vulnerable and visible to reconnaissance aircraft.

On August 21, 1957, such a rocket (after three previous unsuccessful attempts) reached the specified square. On August 27, this was reported to the whole world by TASS. It was a sensation. It was a scandal. American intelligence had failed to warn the U.S. government in advance that large-scale work in this direction was underway in the Soviet Union.

America would catch up later. But it took time.

Let me repeat: the R-7 rocket, the "Magnificent Seven", is good for space flight, but as a combat rocket for mass deployment it was not suitable.

5

Meanwhile, the Khrushchev-Kozlov empire was cracking and coming apart at the seams.

Immediately after Stalin's death, the summer of 1953, we had to pacify East Germany with tanks.

In 1956, Poland and Hungary almost broke away from the Soviet Empire. Saved by tanks. But in the Soviet Union, too, popular rage was boiling. It's just that we have a huge country, all the media are controlled by the Kremlin - if one place goes up in flames, other places don't know about it. In 1956, an uprising broke out in Novorossiysk. The people stormed and smashed the police station, beat policemen, burned documents. In the same year - Orenburg. In October 1956, when Soviet tanks were crushing Budapest, the Soviet city of Slavyansk revolted.

June 11, 1957 - riot in Podolsk.

August 1-4, 1959 - uprising in Temirtau. The Party Committee and the police department were defeated. The rebels seized weapons. Troops were thrown in to suppress the uprising. During the fighting both sides used firearms. 109 soldiers and officers were wounded, including 32 by firearms. Eleven participants in the uprising were killed and 29 wounded. Five of the wounded died in hospital. The order to shoot the rebels was given by Lieutenant General Brezhnev Leonid Brezhnev, a member of the Presidium of the CPSU Central Committee.

On January 15-16, 1961, Krasnodar rebelled. Slogan: to sweep away the Soviet power and organize a new Hungary. People
Colonel-General Issa Aleksandrovich Pliev, commander of the troops of the North Caucasus Military District, "calmed" me down. He calmed him down reliably. The next year he was promoted to army general by Khrushchev.

Before they could put out the fire in Krasnodar, it broke out in Kirovabad.

June 25, 1961 Biysk revolted: the defeat of the police, shooting in the streets, three death sentences to the instigators.

On June 30, 1961, the city of Murom rebelled. Police stations and the city KGB department were smashed, the city prosecutor was beaten, the rebels seized weapons and used them for self-defense. The rebellion was suppressed by militia detachments and troops transferred from other regions. Three leaders of the uprising were sentenced to death.

6

The situation in agriculture, industry, transportation, and the Armed Forces was not happy either. The reason for this is

the extremely inefficient economic system of socialism.

For the sake of social justice, private ownership of the means of production was abolished in the Soviet Union. But if there is no private ownership of the means of production in the country, who will manage production? That's right: the state. And what is the state? Correct: state institutions - government, ministries, state committees, and so on and so forth. Simply put - bureaucracy.

One of two things:

• or industry, transportation, agriculture, newspapers, magazines, theaters, television, and commerce are all in the hands of the citizens of the country,

• or it's all in the hands of the bureaucracy.

Socialism is the power of the state, that is, the power of the bureaucracy. And since it is so, all the years of communist rule, from the moment of seizure of power in 1917 until the very collapse in 1991, the country lived in conditions of a monstrous economic crisis and total shortage of goods. The country lacked everything: houses and buses, shoes and handbags, socks and gloves, carpets and furniture, cars and garages, underwear and medical instruments, roads and bridges, agricultural tools and utensils, toilet paper and school textbooks, washing powder and meat, spare parts and radio lamps.

An anecdote from life: a man carries a dozen rolls of toilet paper. All the people who meet and cross him are interested: where, in what store did he buy it? The man fights off those who pressed him: I didn't buy it! I got it from a dry cleaner!

Queues are the main sign of socialism. Wherever the economy came under the control of the state - that is, the bureaucracy - queues immediately formed: for bread and kerosene, for soap and matches, for sausage and white slippers. Queuing meant scarcity, scarcity created a black market. And it flourished. Khrushchev fought the black market with his favorite method - shootings. He tried to solve economic problems with the tools of the executioner. Clearly, nothing could come of it. The shortage of consumer goods worsened, the black market spread across the country - everyone got everything through acquaintance and blat.

There was only enough vodka for everyone. People were working, building tanks and airplanes, missiles and submarines. And they got money for their work. But goods were scarce. It was called a scientific term - "demand exceeds supply". If the state prints a lot of money, and there is nothing to buy with it, then prices will soar and money will depreciate. The socialist state was unable to increase the production of goods and improve their quality. The only thing left was to somehow withdraw this money from the pockets of citizens. The method was found simple - to introduce a monopoly on the production of vodka and trade in it. Fighting inflation in the Soviet way - to make the people under its jurisdiction drunk. It was decided to declare any other production of vodka, except for state-owned vodka, a criminal offense. Anyone who tried to make vodka himself was imprisoned.

Khrushchev brought the economy of the great country to the point where bread cards were introduced towards the end of his decade power.

What was the economy of the Soviet Union in that victorious year of 1961 is shown by such a fact. Six days after the first human space flight, on April 18, 1961, the First Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, Chairman of the Council of Ministers of the USSR, Comrade Nikita Khrushchev signed a secret order: "To recognize it necessary to present on behalf of the Government of the USSR to the first pilot-cosmonaut of the USSR, Major Gagarin Y. A. and members of his family a Volga car, a residential house, furniture and equipment according to the annex...". The list of the volume contains a lot of good things. Among them:

• bed linen - 6 sets;

• blankets, two of them;

• shoes - two pairs (black and light-colored);

• white shirts, 6 pieces;

• socks - 6 pairs;

• 12 ;

• gloves - 1 pair.

If Gagarin hadn't flown into space, he'd be without socks and .

Here is an "oil painting": the leader of the superpower, the head of the world's first socialist state, the leader of the world communist movement personally distributes handkerchiefs to those who have distinguished themselves.

But! Comrade, believe: soon there will come a happy and joyful life, when everyone will be in need.

7

On July 3, 1961, an accident occurred on the K-19, the first Soviet nuclear submarine armed with nuclear-capable ballistic missiles. Due to shoddy factory welding, the reactor's primary circuit piping ruptured. The dosimeters went off the scale. The reactor lid glowed purple. The reactor cooling system failed, and rapid heating began.
Through the heroic efforts of the crew, an abnormal cooling system was created.

The officers and sailors who were installing the new cooling system, which was not envisaged by any instructions and projects, received strong doses of radiation. Immediately, in front of their comrades, they began to swell up.

On top of that, radio communication was lost. The K-19, with one reactor in a surface position, was on its way to the area in which the ship's commander, Captain 1st Rank Nikolai Vladimirovich Zateev, had calculated that Soviet ships should have been located.

For ten hours K-19 went without communication, without the possibility to report what had happened. Finally, the silhouette of a submarine was sighted, and communication with it was established by signal flares.

It didn't take long for death to come. Eight people died in a few days. Then death got to the others. No one knows how many of them died from the doses they received. On December 26, 1992 (21 years after the incident), the central organ of the Defense Ministry newspaper Krasnaya Zvezda reported: "The fate of all 139 members of the K-19 crew is unknown."

Someone from the crew kept in touch with someone, someone wrote to someone, met someone. But our great Motherland does not care about the fate of its sons. No one in the government, in the Ministry of Defense, or in the leadership of the fleet was interested in the fate of the sailors anymore.

The weak point of the operation plan (and at the same time a big problem for the chief of the GRU, Army General Serov, the commander of the missile forces and artillery of the Ground Forces, Chief Marshal of Artillery Varentsov, and all others who were in the conspiracy) was that Colonel Penkovsky failed to establish contact with an American intelligence officer of sufficiently high rank to whom the fate of planet Earth could be entrusted. Contact had to be established with British intelligence, but the British government did not need all the information passed on by Penkovsky. This information concerned, above all, the confrontation between the USSR and the United States. Therefore, it was needed only by the U.S. government. The British evaluated the information, showed it to the Americans, and only then did the Americans decide to make contact.

Penkovsky's information became known to two intelligence agencies and two governments at the same time. This situation could not last long. Especially since the Americans were clearly hampered by Penkovsky's information.

G L A V A 12.

1

Marshal of the Soviet Union Moskalenko, taking command of the Strategic Missile Forces and listening to the report of his colleague, Commander-in-Chief of the Navy Admiral Gorshkov about our submarine missile power, not without reason resented that the American boats have beautiful names, and the Soviet boats do not have names, but numbers, like convicts in hard labor camps. The Navy seemed to sense the Marshal's dissatisfaction and rectified the situation: K-19 received a very beautiful, albeit unofficial name - "Hiroshima".

"The Hiroshima will continue to fail. Ships have such a fate: their destinies are also similar in some ways the destinies of people. There are human failures. And there are ships like them. "The Hiroshima was bad luck birth. Several people died during construction, before the boat was launched.

During the official ceremony, the champagne bottle didn't break. And so it began.

After the accident in July 1961, Hiroshima was put into repair and decontamination, where it stayed for two and a half years.

In 1969, the Hiroshima collided with a U.S. submarine underwater, but with her bow crumpled, she returned to base on her own.

On February 24, 1972, a fire on the Hiroshima killed 30 officers and sailors. Another 12 were blocked in the aft compartment, where they spent 24 days without light, communications, food, with meager water supplies, intermittently getting air from other compartments. These were the lucky ones. All survived.

And people used to joke: how can a sailor of the Northern Fleet be recognized in the dark? Very simple: he glows.

2

But at least our movie workers did not hit the dirt. All the people they showed the harsh truth of life. In the same 1961 at Mosfilm, director Yuri Vyshinsky made a movie, which was called:
"Submarine." The plot is as follows: the Cold War, the world is on the brink of nuclear catastrophe, at any moment could break out World War III, the ocean, depth, nuclear , communication with the base lost, the captain does not know whether the war has begun or not, to launch a missile strike on the enemy or to wait a little longer .... And one sailor took a dose, he must be urgently removed from the ship and taken to the hospital on the mother ship. But it was decided not to interrupt the combat mission for the sake of one man, let him suffer.

The film premiered on January 17, 1962. The audience

wept.

What's the point of crying? The boat in the movie is American. And the sailor is American. An imperialist. That's how they treat people in the wolf world, in the world of pure money.

At the same time was going on in our great country the movie "White Blood", made by East German brothers. Directed by Gottfried Kolditz. The premiere took place in Moscow on August 15, 1960. Plot: West German officer takes part in nuclear weapons tests in the United States. The meaning of the tests: nuclear charge to crack the defenses of the Reds and immediately use the breach to throw in depth through the epicenter of the explosion that has just occurred. Aggressors - what can you take from them? There are only seven or eight attackers. All in silver spacesuits, look like astronauts. But the insidious Americans do not expose their own people to radiation during tests, but their junior partners in the NATO bloc. A West German officer's spacesuit tore and he grabbed a dose.... Then there's the drama. And then there's the slow, agonizing death. He is treated, but medicine is powerless. In the last shots the epiphany hero looks at the viewer and whispers something like, "People, I loved you!!!! Be vigilant!"

Once again, the audience wept.

And 6 years before the premiere, on September 14, 1954, on the initiative and under the leadership of the outstanding military leader Marshal of the Soviet Union Zhukov Georgy Konstantinovich, the same scenario was played at the Totsk range of the South Ural Military District. A Tu-4 bomber threw one "Tatyanochka" - let me remind you that this was the name of the first Soviet serial atomic bomb RDS-4 with the power of 28 kilotons (which is almost one and a half times the power of the atomic bomb dropped on Hiroshima) - on the prepared defense of the conditional enemy, after which the troops rushed through the resulting breach in the enemy defense. 45,000 men.

In a horrible movie about the damned imperialists - 7 or 8 people. In our reality, 45,000. The enemy attack in shiny spacesuits. We have them in paper capes. They have junior partners in the NATO bloc being framed, we have our own. They get treatment. We don't.

The central organ of the Ministry of Defense, the newspaper Krasnaya Zvezda (Red Star), reported on July 9, 1992:

Basic precautions such as decontamination of equipment, weapons and uniforms were not applied. special medical supervision of their health was established. Classified and forgotten, they lived as best they could, without any attention from the state....
Each gave a subscription, vowing to keep quiet about it for 25 years.

45,000 young men were dying slowly (or quickly), unable to tell the doctors what had happened to them. And the doctors, faced for the first time with the signs of diseases unknown to them, could not do anything to help.

But that's not all. No one warned the participants of those exercises: guys, you'd better refrain from procreating. They came home from the service, got married, had children. And in the first and subsequent generations they had descendants with soft bones, bloated heads, three legs and one arm.

And we cried in movie theaters over "White Blood" and "."

3

Meanwhile, the empire of Khrushchev-Kozlov, or rather, Kozlov-Khrushchev, was steadily heading toward its collapse. On July 23, 1961, the Soviet city of Alexandrovsk revolted. As always in such cases, the anger of the people was directed against the police departments and the city committee of the Communist Party. The rebellion was suppressed. And again - prison terms for activists, four death sentences for instigators.

And a week later, on July 30, 1961, the newspaper Pravda published the new Third Program of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union. The people had to study it, approve it, make additions and refinements. In October 1961, the historic XXII Congress of the Communist Party had to approve this program.

Here we come to what I talked about at the beginning of the book.

Now I will only add that the Third Program of the Communist Party was written by fools and criminals. Judge

for yourself.

According to the Third Program of the Communist Party, it was planned to abolish all taxes on the population in the Soviet Union by the end of 1965. It was decided to build the first phase of communism by 1970. Full communism - in another ten years, by 1980.

It is with pride that I repeat those great destinies. By 1970, it was set:

• To surpass by many times and leave far behind the volume of industrial production of the United States.

• Dramatically increase labor productivity while drastically reducing the work day and work week.

• To ensure the highest standard of living in the Soviet Union compared to any country of capitalism.

• Provide each family with a free apartment, the use of which should also be free.

• Cancel charges for electricity, water, gas, and heating.

• Make public transportation free.

• Introduce free clothing and meals for schoolchildren, free public meals at work.

• Make sanatoriums, resorts, rest homes, tourist bases free of charge.

• The same goes for kindergartens, gymnasiums, swimming pools, stadiums, circuses, theaters, cinemas, mass spectacles, soccer matches and the like.

• Make all stores salesman-less stores.

• Dramatically improve medical care for workers. Medicine and all medicines are free of charge.

By 1980, it was envisioned that the state and all its functions would gradually die out, the transition to public self-governance of people and the realization of the great principle: FROM EACH PEOPLE TO EACH OTHER, TO EACH PEOPLE TO EQUIPMENT.

Simply put, people will work not because they are forced to, but because they realize that everyone's work is for the benefit of the whole society. And everyone will be paid not according to the results of labor, but according to their needs - that is, as much as they want. No one will force anyone. The state will die out. Only free communities of people will remain.

It is quite clear that there will be no crimes in a communist society. There's no need for them. If you want something, go and get it.

That's all great. But the fun guys who made it all up have forgotten that our needs always exceed our capabilities. I put the emphasis on the word "always."

Needs are as unattainable as the horizon.

The limit of a convict's dream in a concentration camp during the reign of Comrade Lenin was a loaf of chernia. One could grind a whole loaf and then die. But he who had a whole loaf dreamed of having a pot of hot porridge. And the one who had both blackberries and balanda thought about a mug of beet moonshine.
We always want something more than what we have. A cadet wants terribly to become a lieutenant, and a lieutenant wants to become a captain. He who has a million dreams of ten. He who has ten dreams of a hundred. Then it goes on and on.

Did any of the authors of this epochal document try to determine, even theoretically, the material needs of even one of our women? Let's take my beloved Tatiana as an example. Is anyone able to calculate her material needs? Has anyone counted how many pairs of shoes she needs to be happy, how many fur coats, cloaks, dresses and hats, how many pairs of gloves, bags and scarves, how many diamonds, opals, emeralds, rubies and sapphires? Has anyone counted how many rings, bracelets, finger rings, brooches, chains, watches it would take to satisfy her desires? Has anyone imagined how many cars, yachts, palaces are needed to satisfy her material needs? Has anyone realized in what planes she would fly, in what hotels she would stay, in what limousines she would drive on the roads, if everything would be limited not by our modest possibilities, but by her broad material needs?

So: having lived for forty years with one woman, a beauty and a clever woman, having bankrupted myself for a Ruby wedding for a modest ring with an appropriate stone, having weighed and evaluated together the passed and experienced, I solemnly proclaim: communism is impossible. In principle.

Men have needs, too. Personally, I have a need to live under palm trees by the azure sea. And not do a damn thing. I don't need a palace. I'm a simple man. I would be enough villa - seven or eight rooms with verandas and balconies over a deserted, white sand beach. My modest needs are a champagne breakfast, big red lobsters for lunch, and a little sturgeon caviar for dinner under the
"Baikal vodka.

The problem is, I'm not the only one. Other men have needs, too. Varied and inexhaustible. And if everyone gets what they need, who would want to languish in malarial swamps, freeze in the tundra, fight off gnats and mosquitoes in the impenetrable taiga, languish in the sands, greedily gulp salt water in the sweltering steppe.

People have the right idea: if you knew the price, you would live in Sochi. But in 1961, the native Communist Party published a program, from which it followed: you don't need to know the ransom, citizens! You don't even need to take cards in your hands - soon we will all live according to our needs!

But if so, then everyone will rush to Sochi. And who will want to swallow the poisonous smoke of Magnitogorsk, raise their children in radioactive Chelyabinsk or spend their lives in the forever poisoned Dzhezkazgan?

In those years, people were rushing not only to Sochi, but also to Moscow, to Peter, to Kiev.

But they were not allowed to go there. In Moscow (as well as in Odessa and Rostov, in Yerevan and Tbilisi, in Voronezh and Konotop), only those who were born and grew up here, who had always lived here, or those who had been assigned to work here could live. But it was impossible to come to a city and live there "for a good living". The system was so organized that all sorts of people were not allowed into the city. Not in any city. And you couldn't go from a small, run-down town to a bigger one either.

Let's imagine communism. There is a city of about ten million people, and everyone takes an apartment according to their needs. Everyone wants to be closer to the center, and that it was quiet, and that the balconies were on the sunny side. And many other things you want. Can you imagine what will happen when everyone starts to fulfill their needs? And if the inhabitants of distant and near neighborhoods rush there too?

And now our native Communist Party has published the program of its activity and the organization of our future life: let us live according to our needs!

If this program were tried to be implemented, tens of millions of people would rush to where it is better, leaving Bratsk and Abakan, Magadan and Taishet, Ust-Ilim and Nakhodka to the wolves and foxes.

Need forces us to live where we don't want to live. It also forces us to do things that no one do voluntarily if they had the chance. For the sake of necessity, we have to get up at three or five in the morning and go to bed at midnight. For the sake of cruel necessity people have to do hard, tedious, dirty, ungrateful, humiliating and dangerous work: carrying bags of cement and cleaning public , breathing asbestos dust, crushing rocks in uranium mines, carrying away other people's leftovers in restaurants, cleaning sewage pipes and digging graves in cemeteries. Have you ever been to a slaughterhouse, cattle yard, a radioactive waste dump, a crematorium, a steel mill? What's a slaughterhouse? In an ordinary sawmill there is so much squealing that by evening it rings in your head. And in a spinning mill - dust and rumble. If everyone will be paid according to their needs, if need will not drive people to Novaya Zemlya and Spitsbergen, to Anadyr and Barabash, who will work where they do not want to? Who will clean the stable for us? If I (and my Tatiana) had everything I needed, would I write this book? I have neither health nor nerves for this tedious exhausting occupation. I am supposed to rest and heal.

So, if somewhere someday someone will be able to provide consumption according to needs, no one will work in harmful, dangerous, tedious, dirty and thankless jobs.

People will probably say that under communism there will be a minimum amount of work that everyone must do and a maximum amount of consumption.

That's a good idea, citizens. But neither in the works of Marxist theorists, nor in the Third Program of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union there were no reservations about limiting consumption. It directly says: to each according to his needs! And there is not a hint or a word about the minimum necessary amount of work done. Work according to ability - and that's it!

But if the drafters of this document meant that everyone would have to do some minimum of work and that some ceiling would be set on our needs, then they should have called things by their proper names:

EACH ONE A RATION, EACH ONE A RATION.

What am I saying? I'm saying there's not enough sturgeon caviar for everyone. And there's not enough luxury mansions on azure shores.

If any of the writers of the Third Program of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union did not understand this, then he was a fool.

And if he understood everything, but led the people to achieve obviously unattainable goals, then he was a criminal.

Communists can be good and bad.

The good ones are those who didn't get to the supreme power: Marx, Che Guevara, Bukharin.

And those who got to power, all of them, without a single exception, fall into the category of fools or criminals: Ceausescu, Castro, Pol Pot, Rakosi.... The list goes on and on.

And this is no accident. To lead the people to a future in which everyone would receive according to their needs, could only be done by scoundrels or hopeless fools. In between these extremes dwelt the majority of this horde (or herd) of fighters: criminal fools.

It is difficult to put Nikita Khrushchev in one category or another. He was a , bloodthirsty and cunning criminal. No one doubts that. But he was also dumb enough.

4

And the world rejoiced. On August 6, 1961, the Soviet Union put into orbit around the Earth the Vostok-2 spacecraft with a man on board. That man was Titov German Stepanovich. A major at the age of 25. For the next half-century, he would remain the youngest person to have been in space. Titov's flight was the first space flight lasting more than a day. The ship made 17 revolutions around the Earth and landed the next day.

On August 9, Moscow welcomed a hero. A government Il-18 with an escort of seven fighter planes - two on each wing and three more trailing a wedge - flew over the jubilant city. At the airfield - Khrushchev, Kozlov and all their inner circle. Red carpet - from the place where the plane should stop, to the very government podium. IL-18 with an escort passed over the airfield, turned around and smoothly went to land. And the fighters rearranged themselves and left with a gain of altitude, as if bowing out. The Il-18 smoothly turned down and froze exactly in the place it was prescribed. Major Titov came down the gangway, walked the red carpet, reported: the mission was completed, ready to fulfill any task of the Motherland!

In the streets and squares of Moscow - millions of people. On Red Square - a demonstration. On the Mausoleum tribune are Khrushchev and Kozlov with Gagarin and Titov.

And immediately the pioneer oath is changed:

Like Gagarin and

Titov, Be ready! -

Always ready!

By evening - a reception in the Grand Kremlin Palace. Chairman of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet, Comrade Leonid Brezhnev reads the decree: for the fulfillment of a responsible government task, for courage, bravery and heroism shown in its performance, to award the title Hero of the Soviet Union Major Titov German Stepanovich with the Order of Lenin and the medal "Gold Star".

And then Khrushchev's speech. Here it was impossible to do without Kuzkina's mother. Nikita mentioned her: we'll show her to you! And Comrade Khrushchev announced that we have something to show. We have bombs of 50 megatons, we have bombs of 100 megatons, we have even more!

5

The world rejoiced, the press was ecstatic. To this delight, on August 12, 1961, the Soviet Union violated the Potsdam Agreement. Signed in 1945 by the heads of the Soviet Union, the United States and Great Britain, the agreement provided for free movement in Berlin. In signing it, Comrade Stalin hoped that the proletarians of the West would seize the opportunity to run through Berlin to a socialist paradise. But they ran to capitalist hell. To keep them from suicidal madness, on August 12, 1961, it was necessary to block West Berlin with detachments of East German police and armed snitches, to girdle the entire perimeter with barbed wire, to stop traffic between the western and eastern parts of the city. And at 1 a.m. on August 13, 1961, the construction of the Berlin Wall began.

The construction went on under the control and cover of police and troops, who were ordered to kill anyone who tried to escape from the "paradise". The order applied to children of any age. An article was written into the Criminal Code: eight years for attempted escape and life imprisonment for assisting in the preparation of escape.

West Berlin was surrounded on all sides by a wall 155 kilometers long. At first, it was a wall of concrete blocks three and a half meters high. But its development and improvement continued constantly.

Soon the wall turned into a powerful complex of engineering structures, consisting of five lines of barriers with a total width of up to 150 meters: escarpments, ditches, counter-escarpments, walls, wire nets, anti-tank hedges welded from pieces of rails, concrete tetrahedrons that could not be broken through even by a tank, terrain covered with sharp steel spikes, sophisticated surveillance and signaling systems that allowed not only to raise the alarm in case of a border violation, but also to kill the intruder even without the participation of border guards.

But the border guards were not left idle either. Every half kilometer a concrete tower was erected with embrasures for firing, searchlights, TV cameras, surveillance and communication equipment and so on. The total number of such towers was 302.

Vigilant guarding of the wall, in addition to people, carried one and a half thousand guard dogs.

6

By building a wall in Berlin, the Soviet Union violated the Potsdam Agreement. It was a step toward escalation. A step toward war. And the U.S. Central Intelligence Agency hastened to remind President Kennedy: We warned you! We knew that the second Soviet cosmonaut would fly in the summer. Clearly, Khrushchev would try to use this triumph to solve the Berlin problem.

From that moment on, the U.S. Central Intelligence Agency began to consider Colonel Penkovsky a source of exceptional importance.

And the U.S. Department of Defense is an extremely inconvenient source of extreme importance.

7

The wall could not solve the problem of the coexistence of the two systems. That was clear to everyone. Khrushchev in the first place. It was necessary to look for a radical solution. And the radical solution was to destroy the basis for comparison. There should not be a situation when our people see what is being done on the other side and shake their heads: yes, their cars are better than ours, and what shoes, and clothes.... For the sake of preventing our unconscious citizens from comparing their lives with the lives of normal people, colossal energy was spent on power plants to jam the enemy's radio voices! For the sake of this, the police and vigilantes tore the tight pants of those who wanted to follow the enemy's fashion on the dance floors. For the sake of this we fed the Communist parties in all countries of the world - let them use our money to undermine the damned capitalism from within!

But these are all half-measures.

It was necessary to make it as bad for them as it was for us. And for this purpose, at least Germany should have been put "on the right track". Why not withdraw American, British and French troops from West Germany? Why not unite Germany into a single democratic state, with a workers' party at its head, with social justice, with the prospect of building a bright future?

What does it take?

First of all, to throw out American, British and French troops from West Germany. So that we don't

got in the way. How? Threats. How else?

Two and a half weeks after the start of the Berlin Wall, on August 31, 1961, the Soviet Union announced that it had reneged on its commitment to refrain from testing nuclear weapons. In 1959 and 1960, the Soviet Union, the United Kingdom, and the United States voluntarily ceased nuclear testing.
Now Comrade Khrushchev said: enough! You do as you wish, but we are resuming the tests!

On September 8, 1961, Khrushchev announced: "Let those who dream of new aggression know that we have a bomb equal in power to a hundred million tons of trinitrotoluene, that we already have such a bomb, and we only need to test the explosive device for it."

The world saw the unprecedented all-destroying power of the Soviet Union. But the world didn't see the downside. The empire was unraveling. On September 15, 1961, the Soviet city of Beslan rebelled. The uprising was crushed by troops and militia. The crowd of unconscious citizens was roused with smoke bombs, and when that didn't help, with machine gun fire. The newspapers did not report on this. They trumpeted new unheard-of achievements in science, technology, art, industry, transportation, and agriculture.

The newspapers were full of reports from labor collectives. The country was preparing for the opening of the historic XXII Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union.

Our leaders, Comrades Khrushchev and Kozlov, Andropov and Brezhnev, Kosygin and Gorbachev, Malenkov and Molotov, Beria and Abakumov, and many, many, many others, lived under communism. All that they promised us in the future, they themselves had in the present: villas on the shores of the azure sea, champagne for breakfast, lobster for lunch and some sturgeon caviar for the evening with "Baikal" vodka. And everything there was free: sanatoriums and recreation centers, swimming pools and gyms. They had free apartments with free water, heating and electricity. Clothes and shoes, understandably, were free, as was food at work. They were treated by the best doctors, and they received free of charge the best medicines from the damned foreign countries.

Comrade Lenin's car was a Rolls-Royce. The leader knew a lot about cars. Comrade Dzerzhinsky wore a soldier's overcoat (although he never served in the army), but this, as they say nowadays, is "ponts". And Comrade Dzerzhinsky lived in a mansion, which before the coup belonged to the richest man in Russia. And he ate accordingly. The leaders rested in tsarist palaces to the sound of the surf.

But that's not all. Those who led us into the bright future had even more in the present than what we were promised in the coming decades. They had legions of servants: cooks and hairdressers, cleaners and drivers, bodyguards and tailors, dentists and cooks, masseuses, waitresses and gamekeepers, gardeners and private pilots.

And let's imagine that the promised year 1980 has arrived. And everyone is equal. As we have already established, there could not be enough sturgeon caviar and palaces under palm trees for everyone. Not in principle. And our leaders would have had to share their living space and sausage with the people under their jurisdiction. I suppose they only dreamed of that.

Let's imagine that a wonderful tomorrow has come, and the former servants of the leaders receive according to their needs. And the needs of the servant, it should be borne in mind, are even higher than the needs of the boss. It is not for nothing that it is said: God forbid a pig to have horns, and a servant to be a barbarian. But if yesterday's servant gets according to his needs, why should he clean the chief's dirty plates, beat out carpets and scratch his heels in the evening?

Let us consider: did the leaders really want to build communism and live in that beautiful time when no one would protect and serve them? When no one would drive game into their nets and massage their strained backs?

So: the leaders of the Soviet Union, from the Kremlin to the last rural district committee, did not need communism. All three programs of the Communist Party were a primitive deception: tighten your belts, citizens, today, and tomorrow everyone will be according to their needs.

G L A V A 13.

1

On October 17, 1961, the XXII Congress of the CPSU began its work in the Kremlin Palace of Congresses. This was Nikita Khrushchev's finest hour, the highest point of his flight. This moment was also the highest point of Frol Romanovich Kozlov's career.

Convention Agenda:

• Reporting Report of the Central Committee of the CPSU. Speaker: Comrade Khrushchev.

• Draft of the Third Program of the CPSU. Speaker: Comrade Khrushchev.

• On changes in the CPSU Charter. Rapporteur: Comrade Kozlov.

• Election of the central organs of the Communist Party.

The Congress of the Communist Party is a situation when the entire might of the KGB, the police, and the Armed Forces are in a state of highest readiness. You bet: the entire leadership of the Soviet Union - political, military, ideological, economic, transportation, scientific, all the ministers, marshals, the entire Central Committee are gathered in one hall. In one point, if you like. Only deputies were left in the field. What if the enemies start a war? What if provocateurs of imperialist intelligence raise a new uprising in some Soviet city?

Just in case, we keep our powder dry. In that case, there are reinforced police units roaming the streets. In that case, there was unprecedented abundance in the stores; you could buy sausage, if you had the money, or even sausages. And in Moscow in those days even bananas were sold. That's how we live. And we will live even better!

And in the . the imperialists were not slumbering.

As early as September 29, 1961, ten American M-48 tanks and three M-59 armored personnel carriers were withdrawn to Friedrichstrasse in West Berlin and remained there permanently. On October 26, 1961, M-48 tanks with mounted bulldozer equipment moved toward Checkpoint Charlie on the border with East Berlin with the express intention of making a breach in the Berlin Wall and tearing down the barriers erected by the GDR authorities in defiance of the Potsdam Agreement.

It was the very moment when the delegates of the historic party congress were discussing the program of grandiose transformations such as the history of mankind had never known. It was the very moment when the "Kuzkin Mother" product was undergoing its last test at the Olenya Polar Airfield.

From the moment the American tanks appeared on Friedrichstrasse, they were under constant surveillance from the Soviet side. On October 26, as soon as the engines of the American tanks roared, this was reported to the Intelligence Directorate of the GSVG (Group of Soviet Forces in Germany) headquarters.

The GSVG is six armies: two Guards Tank Armies (1st and 2nd), two Guards General Armies (8th and 20th), one Strike Army (3rd), which is more powerful than any tank army, and one Air Army (16th). The GSVG is 7,600 tanks, 2,500 combat aircraft, 8,100 armored personnel carriers and armored artillery tractors, thousands of guns and mortars, tens of thousands of vehicles, and half a million soldiers and officers.

The Commander-in-Chief of the GSVG, Marshal of the Soviet Union Konev, was in Moscow at that moment, understandably, at a party congress. The decision was made by the First Deputy Commander-in-Chief of the GSVG, Colonel-General Ivan Ignatievich Yakubovsky. As soon as ten American tanks moved toward the barrier, ten Soviet T-54s - the 7th Company of the 68th Guards Tank Regiment of the 6th Guards Motorized Rifle Division of the 20th Guards Army - moved out of the alleys on the Soviet side to meet them.

No jokes here: external fuel tanks removed, closed board numbers, open embrasures gun sights, uncovered guns, anti-aircraft and twin machine guns.

Ten by ten. The ones froze on their side, the ones on theirs. Only ours have stronger armor, lower silhouette, stronger 100mm cannon. However, we'll be firing at zero range. It doesn't matter who has what armor and what cannon. It's whoever hits first wins.

Ten against ten is the visible part of the so far bloodless clash. Exactly ten against ten were put up in order not to aggravate the situation. But the entire 68th Guards Tank Regiment is here, nearby, in the neighboring streets and alleys: 94 tanks and 12 APCs. But the battle alarm (without leaving the towns) Colonel General Yakubovsky announced the entire group of troops, raised all five hundred thousand fighters. Give the command - and tank, motorized rifle, artillery, anti-aircraft and all other regiments, brigades and divisions, breaking fences and walls, would instantly break out of the military camps and take up combat positions and areas of concentration.

Colonel-General Yakubovsky announced the alarm and immediately - an urgent encryption to four addresses: to Comrade Khrushchev, Comrade Kozlov, Minister of Defense Marshal of the Soviet Union Malinovsky, Chief of the General Staff Marshal of the Soviet Union Zakharov.

The Congress continues its work. Speakers miners and weavers, steelworkers and railroad workers: Approve! Approve! Approve! Party plans - into life!

But the delegate to the Congress of the Communist Party, the Commander-in-Chief of the GSVG, Marshal of the Soviet Union Konev Ivan Stepanovich, is already rushing in a limousine at a red light on Gorky Street. Hurry to the Central Aerodrome!
He must be in Germany at this hour.

Marshals of the Soviet Union Malinovsky and Zakharov also left the conference room without making a fuss. Their place - in a deep bunker in the depths of the Lenin Mountains: Northern Group of Forces (our troops in Poland) - action alert! Southern Group (in Hungary) - action alert! To the Baltic Fleet! The Baltic, Belorussian, Kiev, Pre-Carpathian Military Districts! Strategic Missile Forces! Air Defense Forces of the country! Alert! Alert! Alert! Alert!

2

In East Berlin, all approaches to the area of the confrontation between Soviet and American tanks are blocked by the East German police. But five particularly vetted young Communist women were allowed through. And they decorated the armor of the Soviet tanks with flowers. And all the newspapers of East Germany howled with joy: so well are we, the inhabitants of East Germany, living behind the barbed wire, so well that we do not know how to thank our dear liberators, with the help of whom it was possible to fence off the damned bourgeois shop windows.

Two dozen tanks on both sides. For many hours, standing opposite each other and pointing their barrels at each other, they saw the enemy's grin through the reticles of their telescopic sights.

And the world was on the brink of World War III. On the verge of self-destruction. It would be a good time to ask the question: Why did the damned Americans tease us? Did they not realize that a single shot, like Danila Principle's shot in Sarajevo in 1914, could cause an irreversible reaction? In this case - a chain reaction in the truest sense! It could have been an accidental shot!

The question is correct. But we should also think about something else: what was left for them if the Soviet Union violated the Potsdam Agreement?

Captain Voytchenko, commander of the 7th Tank Company of the 68th Guards Tank Regiment, stood with his Guardsmen against the American tanks like a tamer against a raging lion. Somewhere there were secret negotiations at the highest level, someone was persuading someone, someone was proving something to someone. Somewhere an agreement was reached and an order was given from the very top: Captain, withdraw your young men.

The tanks of the 7th Company withdrew one by one, backwards, without showing their sterns to the enemy. They crawled back into the alley and only there turned around. The last to move back was the company, without losing the targets in his sight.

The American tanks also withdrew. There's no way they could have withdrawn first. It would have been a humiliation. They would have come to the dividing line, collided head-on with the T-54s and turned back..... To avoid this, a diplomatic compromise was reached: they marched forward, collided with Soviet tanks, stood for 24 hours, the Soviet tankers, having accomplished the task, withdrew, the American ones returned home. A draw.

And "Kuzkin's Mother" was hung under the belly of a bomber that night.

3

By the way, "Kuzkin's Mother" was at the Polar airfield Olenya by that very moment! In Berlin, it was a

beautiful picture, almost an idyll: American tanks went for a walk on the
Friedrichstrasse, to see what color the barrier was. Ours also went out for some air. We stood and admired each other. Realizing that the Americans were up to no mischief, ours returned home.
The Americans have peacefully gone to their own place, too. That's great. That's fine. You have no complaints, and neither do we. We didn't even have a fight.

But 48 hours later, thousands of kilometers away, it rumbled in a way that shook the planet.

The explosion of the most powerful thermonuclear charge in world history had nothing to do with the Berlin crisis. The explosion was prepared long ago, how could anyone know that American tanks in late October 1961 would move to the border barrier?

But they moved, they were stopped, the conflict is over. And a couple days later, an explosion! The likes of which have never been seen before. I hope it never happens again.

It wasn't planned. It just happened. But it turned out beautifully: you did something naughty, we responded, and after that - a small addition to the completed conflict. A kind of subtle hint: don't joke around like that again, or you might get a kick in the teeth.... And anyway, couldn't you choose an alley for your walks?

4

And again Penkovsky's meeting with British and American intelligence. And the wary incredulity

views: you talk about the weakness of the Soviet Union, but a bomb with a capacity of 57 million tons of TNT was detonated in the Soviet Union. Is this evidence of weakness?

- That's right, gentlemen. It's a sign of weakness.

And it was the pure and holy truth. The explosion was evidence of weakness.

The 602, together with the parachute, weighed more than 27 tons. No Soviet missile was capable of lifting such a weight. Only the Tu-95B strategic bomber could carry such a charge. The bomb was made in a single copy, and the bomb carrier Tu-95V also existed in a single copy. The dimensions of the bomb were such that it was necessary to remove the flaps of the bomb compartment, but even then the bomb did not fit inside. Therefore, it was necessary to remove the fuselage tanks and cut out part of the fuselage.

Because some of the tanks had to be removed, the bomber's range was reduced. Because the belly of the bomb still protruded from under the fuselage of the carrier, because the bomb bay was not covered with flaps, aerodynamic performance deteriorated sharply. As a consequence - increased fuel consumption, and the radius was reduced even further. Maximum bomb load Tu-95 - 12 tons. And it was loaded with 27 tons. With such a load
Tu-95B to reach America was not capable. But if a lone sluggish subsonic bomber with an exorbitant cargo without the cover of fighters and would be able to reach America through the Pole, he still had no chance to break through to the vital centers of the country through the patrol areas of American and Canadian supersonic fighters.

Khrushchev tried to envision the bomb as some kind of superweapon with which he could crush America. To please Khrushchev, the designers called the bomb "Kuzkina's Mother." But this superweapon was inoperable. This bomb could be detonated only in one's own territory according to the principle: beat one's own people so that strangers would be afraid. But there was nothing to hit strangers with. The bomb was "Kuzkina's mother" in name only, and in fact - the Tsar-bomb, like the Tsar-bell, which never rang, and the Tsar-gun, which never fired.

All this Colonel Penkovsky stated clearly and simply. What

followed from all this?

This made it quite clear that the bomb was detonated only to intimidate America and the world. And why terrorize? To accomplish a specific objective. Which ? Obviously, to solve the problem of Berlin and Germany as a whole.

— What to expect next?

— Like what? - Penkovsky was surprised. - To expect further intimidation. It will increase until the German problem is solved in favor of the Soviet Union, until foreign troops are withdrawn from West Germany, until Germany is united into a single democratic state.
Democratic as we understand it.

— A new escalation? A new intimidation? An even bigger bomb?

— No. Clearly not that. To detonate a more powerful bomb is simply dangerous for the Soviet Union itself. There would be some other kind of deterrence.

— Which ?

Colonel Penkovsky didn't know that. But he warned me that he would! I predict something that cannot be predicted. Expect unexpected.

5

Penkovsky is an extremely important source for the CIA. Nothing like this has ever happened in the history of intelligence. Nor could it. Such a confrontation on the verge of nuclear war and mutual destruction happened for the first time. And it was at this moment that one superpower was looking at the other's cards through Penkovsky's eyes. The only thing that confused American intelligence was the Colonel's incredible degree of knowledge. He could not have known such things. He could not have had access to such documents. But everything he reported was verifiable and confirmed. Everything he predicted came true and was accomplished.

But for America's Armed Forces, for bankers and war mongers, for ministers and senators, for generals and admirals, Penkovsky's revelations were worse than the worst stock market news. Penkovsky's revelations threatened America with a repeat of the Great Depression of 1929, when everything collapsed and millions of unemployed people huddled in lines for free soup.

Obviously, no one except the top leaders of the CIA and the President of the United States was supposed to know where the information was coming from. No one knew that. But intelligence collects and processes information about the enemy not for itself, but for those who run the state, its armed forces and military industry, that is, for those very senators and ministers, generals and admirals, bankers and industrialists.

They didn't like that information. And they didn't want to believe it. What if the damned Russians were just pretending to be weak, in order to put their vigilance to sleep, in order to break out more in their superiority?

next?

The fountain should have been plugged. But how, if you don't know where the information is coming from? Simple. We have to let the information leak out. Let Khrushchev know that someone is spilling his secrets. Let him look for the one who's leaking.

Just recently, Khrushchev was in America and blurted out: We read all your ciphers! Now

is the time to respond with the same courtesy: We know something about you too!

6

On every telephone set of the Soviet Army there was a stern warning: THE ENEMY IS LISTENING! These two words were written on every transmitting and receiving apparatus, on the wall of every command post, every communication center. Whether the enemy was eavesdropping or not, conversations were to be conducted only as if it was a hundred percent certainty: they were eavesdropping. This was to be the starting point.

And there was confidence. During the Soviet missile tests, Soviet fleet ships went to a predetermined area of the Pacific Ocean with the task of detecting the exact location where the warheads would fall. Together with them, the ships of the probable enemy - American and British - were rushing to the same area. The Soviet ships kept in a group, not giving away the area of the fall in advance. And only at the very last moment, having received a coded signal, they diverged in three directions, forming the corners of a triangle, in the center of which the head unit was to fall.

Along with the Soviet ships, the uninvited observers were also moving away. But an oddity was noticed: sometimes the American ships began maneuvering even before the Soviet ships received the signal. And this was suggestive.

There were other indications that the enemy was not slumbering. Therefore, it was impossible to trust radio communications and encrypted messages in matters of extraordinary importance. In December 1961, the issue was such that the Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Soviet Union to the United States, Mikhail Alekseevich Menshikov, did not send information by encryption. He did not entrust such a message to any means of communication, nor even to his own coder. He informed Moscow with a conditional signal: there was something that had to be reported personally to the highest leadership of the country.

There were no direct flights from the Soviet Union to America at that time. No one needed them: who and where to take them? And why? And the technology of that time did not have the capacity to fly so far. A year later, in December 1962, a regular service between Moscow and Havana would be opened. The largest passenger airplane in the world, the Tu-114, would operate on this line. The Moscow-Havana route would be the longest in the world at that time. But that would be later. And in December 1961 it was possible to call an airplane to Havana for one passenger. One government Tu-114 always stood ready for such or such an occasion.

But how does a Soviet ambassador get to Havana when U.S.-Cuba relations are on the brink of war? It's easy. From Washington to Mexico, from Mexico to Cuba.

Before departure, the ambassador called his first deputy and, in the presence of witnesses, locked the sealed package in a safe: as soon as I flew to Moscow, I would give a signal, and you would destroy the package without opening it. If I die on the way, you will open it, familiarize yourself with it, memorize everything and fly to Moscow yourself. And seal the package again. This information must be reported to the highest leadership of the country, but I forbid you to send it in code.

7

Ambassador Menshikov flew without any adventures. He should have met Nikita Khrushchev in person and reported. But Khrushchev was absent. Khrushchev was traveling either on his estates, or made another visit. Comrade Kozlov Frol Romanich was left in charge. And the matter could not be delayed. I had to report to Comrade Kozlov.

And the Ambassador reported that the source of information M-10-B, with whom the Ambassador has established a relationship of trust, being in a state of mild intoxication, at a diplomatic reception reported information indicating the leakage of secrets of state importance from the very top of the military leadership of the Soviet Union.

Americans are aware of the following information:

• There are two missile armies within the Strategic Missile Forces, one headquartered in Vinnitsa, the other — in Smolensk;

• 8K63 carriers form the backbone of the missile group, while deployment of more powerful 8K65 carriers has begun;

• the chief designer of the 8K63 is Jagel or Engel;

• The 8K63 can carry a 1 megaton or 2.3 megaton charge, propellant is kerosene.

The ambassador doesn't know if it's true. The ambassador isn't supposed to know anything like that.

But if it is true... Comrade Kozlov asked: How did the Ambassador manage to remember all this?

The Ambassador replied that a diplomat's memory is a tool like a sniper's scope. However, not relying on memory, the Ambassador went away for a short time during the conversation and wrote everything down. After that, he returned to the conversation, asked again, clarified, and wrote it down again.

FROL ROMANOVICH KOZLOV was born on August 5, 1908. At the age of 15 he was a laborer at a textile factory. Graduated from the Polytechnic Institute. Metallurgical engineer. Since 1939 he was a parttorg of the metallurgical plant. From 1940 and almost throughout the war - Secretary of the Izhevsk City Committee of the Communist Party. From 1944 - in the central apparatus of the Communist Party. From 1947 - Second Secretary of the Kuibyshev Regional Committee of the Communist Party. Since 1950 - First Secretary of the Leningrad City Committee of the Communist Party, that is, the master of Leningrad. From 1953 - First Secretary of the Leningrad Regional Committee of the Communist Party, that is, the master of Leningrad and the Leningrad region. From 1958 - First Deputy Chairman of the USSR Council of Ministers. Since 1960 - Secretary of the Central Committee of the CPSU. In fact, Kozlov was the second secretary of the Central Committee and the second, after Khrushchev, man in the country, although officially the position was called "Secretary of the Central Committee".

G L A V A 14.

1

Comrade Kozlov summoned the desk officer and asked the question: how many missile armies do we have? And he got the answer: two. The headquarters of one was in Vinnitsa, the other in Smolensk.

Comrade Kozlov demanded that a complete list of everyone who had been admitted to this information be drawn up immediately. The list was not very long.

While the desk officer was compiling the list, Comrade Kozlov called another desk officer and asked a question about the capacity of the nuclear charges on the 8K63 missile. Again, he demanded a list of everyone who might know about it. Do not think that this list turned out to be very long. The fact is that rocket officers do not need to know at all what is the power of the charges of the very missiles they are preparing for launch. I will say more: even those officers (in the army they are called tadpoles), whose duty is to store, maintain, dock and prepare for use the warheads, do not need to know the power of the product at all.

In the course of training, they can be given overestimated or underestimated data. It is also possible to say nothing: the product weighs so many kilograms, consists of so many parts, and it must be cared for in accordance with these instructions.... This knowledge is enough. And if a tadpole works with a light warhead, he does not need to know that in addition to it for the same missile there is also a heavy warhead. And if someone knows about it, how would he know whether there are two types of charges for a given missile or five?

A third referent was also summoned to Comrade Kozlov. Questions were asked, answers were received, and another list was drawn up.

After that, Comrade Kozlov summoned the chairman of the KGB, Colonel-General Semichastny Vladimir Efimovich Semichastny.

Semichastny accepted the post of chairman of the USSR KGB on November 13, 1961. Exactly one month passed after his appointment, and on December 13, the second (and actually the first) man in the state demanded Semichastny into his office, ordered him to check three lists and identify those who were on all three.

The answer was baffling. The list included people, on whose shoulders shone either stars of the first magnitude or whole constellations of luminaries of a slightly smaller caliber. All of the star bearers had been vetted by the war. None of them has and cannot have direct contacts with foreigners. They all live and work under the protection and surveillance of the watchful authorities. Any contact with a foreigner is only of a protocol nature and can only take place in the presence of those who are keeping an eye on what is going on.

But the leak could only come from this circle. And if they have no direct contact with enemy intelligence, it remained to assume that the contact is not direct, but indirect, through an intermediary. That intermediary had to be identified.

Comrade Kozlov assigned this task to the head of the KGB, Semichastnyy, warning that it was better not to disturb Nikita Khrushchev for the time being. Kozlov himself would inform the first head of the country at the appropriate moment.

2

Mikhail Alekseevich Menshikov, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Soviet Union to the United States, never went to America again. A person who knows about the leak of information from the top leadership of the Soviet Armed Forces should not be allowed to go not only to America, but even to friendly Bulgaria. On December 30 of the same year, 1961, Menshikov was removed from the post of Soviet Ambassador to the United States and appointed Minister of Foreign Affairs ...
Russian Federation.

Let's take an example of what this promotion meant. Great Britain consists of England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland. Not counting the Isle of Man, the Channel Islands of Jersey and Guernsey, Gibraltar, the Cayman Islands and so on and so forth. England is the main and principal part of Great Britain. They are sometimes confused, mistakenly referring to the whole of the UK as England. The UK has a Foreign Secretary who sits in London. But is it necessary, in addition, to have a Foreign Secretary for England, who also sits in the same London? And if such a position is introduced, what will the Foreign Minister of England do? To bend his own line contrary to the foreign policy of Great Britain?

The Soviet Union was built on the same principle. It is composed of 15 republics. The Russian Federation is the central and most important part, without which there can be no Soviet Union.

The capital of the Soviet Union is Moscow. The Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Soviet Union was Comrade Andrei Andrey Andreyevich Gromyko.

In addition, Moscow is the capital of the largest republic of the Soviet Union, the Russian Federation. The two are also sometimes confused, referring to the entire Soviet Union as Russia.

Comrade Mikhail Alekseevich Menshikov, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation, was planted in Moscow. What he was doing, what his duties were, why such a position was invented, I have

I can't guess.

Whatever he was doing, he was no longer allowed outside Moscow. Not even on vacation on the shores of our native Black Sea.

3

Meanwhile, things were not going well in the Soviet Union. The food problem was getting worse. Ministers proposed a simple and long-proven solution: to introduce cards for bread, meat and butter. Like during the war. What is not a solution? Khrushchev procrastinated, but it didn't get any better. The queues at the food stores were growing day by day. And it was decided to raise prices on basic products, including the main product, which at all times was vodka. This was presented as a new proof of the party's concern for the welfare of the people. The calculation: if the people have less money, it means that the queues will be shorter. But even this "economically justified" calculation somehow failed. The queues did not get shorter. And the people responded to another manifestation of the Communist Party's concern for the welfare of the people with jokes about the promised abundance and songs like this one:

Comrade, believe me, it

will come, the price of

vodka will be the same,

And the appetizer will be

discounted, - Nikitka will

retire.

There was also a poem with an answer to the question "Who in Russia should live well?":

Nyurka the barmaid,

Yurka Gagarin,

Khrushchev and

Brezhnev,

The rest of us, the same.

Khrushchev had no choice. The people of the Soviet Union and the entire socialist camp realized that we were lagging behind, and life was better there. Khrushchev set grandiose tasks: to catch up and overtake! But for some reason it was not possible to catch up. The economy of socialism, that is, an economy run by criminals and fools, could not provide prosperity.

What should we do? We had to come up with something to make it as bad as ours. Or even worse. For this purpose, West Germany had to be put on the path of socialist development, to lower its standard of living to the standards of East Germany, or better - to the level of the Soviet Union or even lower.

History has put the question as a threshold: either Khrushchev will achieve the withdrawal of American troops from Europe, unite Germany and turn it to the path of socialist justice, or the economy of the free world will corrupt the population of both the Soviet Union and all the subordinate states by its successes and achievements, by its example. And Lenin's great cause will collapse together with the Soviet Union and the whole socialist camp.

And the only way to achieve the withdrawal of American troops from Germany, or better, from all of Europe, was through threats. Therefore, the crisis was inevitable.

4

The missile crisis was imminent. It had to be averted at all costs. That's right: at all costs.

The chief of the GRU, Army General Serov, and the commander of the missile forces and artillery of the Ground Forces, Chief Marshal of Artillery Varentsov, faced a task of exceptional complexity. It was necessary to convince the U.S. government, and at the same time the British government, that the missile and nuclear power of the Soviet Union is dramatically exaggerated. If the persuasion failed, if the leaders of the West believed in the monstrous power of Soviet submarines, strategic bombers, missiles, nuclear and thermonuclear charges, then the response in the event of a crisis would be corresponding - that is, with a powerful overlap. And all mankind will have to pay the

most terrible price for this delusion.

It was only possible to gain the confidence of the U.S. and British leadership by transmitting through Col.

The American and British experts, having compared thousands of facts and checked a lot of figures, could be convinced that everything fits together, that Penkovsky is not lying, that he must be trusted, and that at the moment of an inevitable and imminent conflict we should not give in to the threats of the Kremlin's nothingness.

But how to transmit even five or ten thousand pictures of top secret documents of special importance? There were only

two ways.

First: Penkovsky is able to travel to Paris and London as part of the Soviet delegation. This makes it possible to smuggle microfilms by hiding them in the double bottom of a suitcase or the heel of a shoe.

The second: to hand over materials in Moscow to British or American diplomats. Which way is

better?

Both are the worst. Any intelligence officer knows that 90 percent of agency intelligence failures occur in agency communications. Undercover communications are radio, graphic signals, hiding places, face-to-face meetings. Each method of transmitting information has its own drawbacks. Radio communication could not help here, because it was to transmit copies of documents. Only hiding places and meetings remained.

It is extremely dangerous to bring copies of documents across the border because everyone is shaken when crossing the border. And very seriously. And if you are a Soviet diplomat? If, according to the Vienna Convention of 1815, a diplomat can't even be shaken down by his own border guards? Don't worry. We can do anything. A Soviet diplomat can be shaken down, too. Only secretly. So as not to disturb them. We know how to do it. When they want to.

It's much easier to take the documents in Moscow, hand them over to the embassy, and then they will fly by diplomatic pouch.

But there's a problem here, too.

This way is bad because in Moscow all foreigners are closely monitored.

It was decided to use both ways. The microfilms were to be transferred in Moscow, and at personal meetings abroad to answer the questions that arose, to receive new assignments to cover those issues that arouse doubts and the greatest interest.

In Moscow, GRU Colonel Oleg Vladimirovich Penkovsky was covered up in such a way that it was impossible to pick on him: yes, I meet with foreigners. Yes, I have conversations. This is my job. Recruit especially important agents among British and American diplomats. By personal order of the GRU chief, Army General Ivan Serov. And I report only to him, because the case is extremely important, responsible and top secret.

And Ivan Alexandrovich will confirm: yes, we are trying to drive wedges under the American (or British) ambassador. But nothing has worked so far. In intelligence, you can't take a cavalry raid. It's a long, painstaking job....

Penkovsky was so legendary that it was impossible to suspect or incriminate him. But trouble

came from the other side.

Comrade Frol Romanich Kozlov, a member of the Presidium of the Central Committee of the Communist Party, the second man in the Soviet Union, was informed that some of the generals in the highest circles of the military leadership, or perhaps even marshals, were sabotaging the decisions of the country's leadership and transmitting to the enemy top secret information of special importance. Moreover, Comrade Kozlov knew exactly what information was being passed on.

Because the information was of exceptional importance, it was easy to calculate the circle of those admitted to each piece of information. And because the information was diverse, there were several groups of initiates. A comparison of the lists revealed those who were simultaneously admitted to all these top secret pieces of information.

5

Around each marshal, around each four-star general - a powerful ring of snitches: drivers, aides, maids, cleaners, cooks, waitresses, bath attendants, masseurs - that is, all those who in 1980 at the advent of communism will not be, all those without whom in 1961 the life of a state or military figure is impossible. All these servants, called in those days as servants, were the recruiting base of the KGB. All of them, all of them, without a single exception, signed a cooperation agreement at the time of their hiring. And the guards were KGB officers without any disguise. The guards in those days were called attached for some reason. The first point of their duties was not to protect their wards, but to monitor them. Guarding and physical protection was only their fourth duty. So, all these people, from the attached to the housekeepers, were given a combat task: to increase vigilance, pay special attention to the following points.... and to report daily.

A week later, on December 201961, KGB Chairman Colonel-General Semichastny reported to Comrade

Kozlov: the information leak comes from the Chief Marshal of Artillery Varentsov through the head of the GRU, Army General Serov. Colonel Oleg Vladimirovich Penkovsky of the GRU serves as a courier.

In Moscow, Penkovsky had no fear of KGB surveillance. He met almost openly with American and British intelligence officers in the center of Moscow, in the most luxurious hotels and restaurants. After all, it was his job to make acquaintances among potential bearers of enemy secrets, to communicate with foreigners, to study them, to identify weaknesses, interests and hobbies, and then recruit them. In Moscow, thousands of KGB and GRU officers are engaged in this noble endeavor. So Penkovsky was reliably protected from a blow from the front.

But Colonel Penkovsky was extremely vulnerable to a stab in the back. Word came from the United States. He had been ratted out by those he was saving. A blow from this side was fatal, impossible to dodge. Not even theoretically.

6

Communism has one interesting feature. It cannot be partially understood. It cannot be partially misunderstood. If you don't understand it, you don't understand it at all, deeply and completely. But if you do understand it, you understand it to the end, to the very end.

The outstanding British writer George Orwell understood communism completely. And he described it in his great novel "1984": a shining prospect of coming happiness for all mankind, a brilliant leader at the head of society, the only true doctrine, war against all those who are not with us, deafening ringing propaganda that tells of incredible achievements, powerful secret police, total snitching, dirty streets, broken houses, shortage of everything, queues, nothing to eat, muddy syvukha as a drink. But at least the secret police work with jewel-like precision.

The wise Briton died at the age of 46. He did not live to see the era of "Kuzkin's Mother" and the Third Program of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, which promised dazzling happiness in 20 years, by 1980. But everything he laid out in his book was repeated in the Penkovsky case. The secret police worked in such a way that their feat can be written in a counterintelligence textbook.

For the leading staff of the Communist Party, the secret police and the army, Comrade Stalin built huge houses with spacious bright apartments. Penkovsky was a colonel, but worked as a general, and at one time, working in Turkey, held two general positions at the same time. That is why he lived in a general's house, the windows of his apartment overlooked the embankment of the Moskva River. It was impossible to look into the windows of his office, because it was high. That's why he laid out top-secret instructions near the window and took them down. There's more light there. But the KGB comrades had cleverly managed to set up an observation post with ultra-powerful optics (West German, of course) in the apartment of a house on the other side of a fairly wide navigable river.

But that's not all. Penkovsky's apartment was regularly and thoroughly searched. Every plate in the kitchen, every book on the shelf and every doormat in the hallway remained exactly where they were supposed to be after the search. Like Orwell: even a bookmark in a book was left in place after a secret search.

And in order not to prevent the search from being interfered with, brigades of stompers followed Penkovsky himself, his wife and daughter. As soon as one of his wards turned towards the house, an alarm signal was given to the searchers: pull up your fishing rods!

It was clear that the whole apartment was bugged. Not only that, but the tenant who lived one floor above had been quietly relocated with his family to another building. From the vacated apartment they drilled a microscopic, inconspicuous hole right above Penkovsky's desk and filmed everything the colonel laid out on the desk.

But even that was not enough. Above the window of the room that served as Penkovsky's office, there was a balcony on the floor above. In this balcony, a hole was drilled without noise and gnashing, and equipment was installed that allowed the office to be viewed from the outside through the window and to film Penkovsky at moments when he was taking pictures of secret documents with a Minox spy apparatus. When Penkovsky's case was made public, no one answered the simple and obvious question: how did Penkovsky manage to take home top secret documents that are organized in such a way that they never leave their storage places. It was impossible to do so without the help of high-ranking patrons.

I don't need to explain that the surveillance brigades that followed the colonel did not consist of the usual 5-7 people. They were powerful teams of 30-40 men and women with a dozen vehicles.
Surveillance was round the clock. Stompers from the surveillance team changed clothes, wigs, umbrellas, bags, etc., giving the impression that one person did not appear twice. In addition, the surveillance teams themselves were regularly changed for the same purpose.

The surveillance that had been established on Penkovsky could not be detected by even the most experienced intelligence officer. The full might of the most powerful secret police in the history of mankind was thrown against him.

This went on for almost a year. But here's the question: why wasn't Colonel Penkovsky arrested immediately after it became clear what he was doing? Why didn't the KGB crack down on this activity?

Maybe the Chekists began to plant dezu Penkovsky, and he, without realizing it, fed the enemy intelligence tuff?

No, citizens. Until the very end, Colonel Penkovsky passed on only reliable information, in huge quantities, of the highest grade and degree of secrecy.

This oddity interested many people. How so: the GRU colonel passes information to the enemy, the KGB knows about it, the KGB through a hole in the balcony overhanging the window of the office, filmed not only the expression of Penkovsky's face at the moment of shooting, but also the documents themselves. The evidence is sufficient. The origin of the materials is also established. Stop this outrage, comrade Chekists! Tie up the white hands! Take them to the torture cellar!

Why did the Chekists record what was happening, but did nothing? No one has ever given an answer to this question.

7

And the answer lay on the surface. One only had to remember who Comrade Kozlov Frol Romanovich was, and what his interest was.

The interest of Frol Romanovich Kozlov, the Second Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party, was become the First Secretary, that is, the ruler of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, and at the same time the master of all the brotherly countries - Poland, East Germany, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Romania, Bulgaria, Mongolia, North Vietnam, Cuba, and so on and so forth. Everyone knew: Kozlov was next. Americans printed his portrait on the covers of magazines: here was the one who would replace Khrushchev. But Khrushchev was sitting tight and was not going to leave. Nikitka should have been retired long ago, as it was suggested in the songs of the people. And in order to bring down Nikitka and take the throne, it was necessary first to lower him in the eyes of the people and the ruling nomenclature. Khrushchev had to somewhere very seriously ... how can I put it delicately? In a word, he had to make a serious mistake, to get into an unpleasant situation.

Comrade Menshikov, the Soviet Union's ambassador to the United States, reported to Kozlov about the leak of top secret information of national importance from the bowels of the Ministry of Defense. And Comrade Kozlov realized that this was his finest hour. Here it is, the opportunity to expose Khrushchev to a scandal. Khrushchev is going abroad, and at the same time his marshals are doing a lot of things! Isn't it time to remove Comrade Khrushchev from his post? Isn't it time to restore order in the army and the state?

The Penkovsky case gave Kozlov the opportunity to kill two boars with one shot. Khrushchev was the first boar, the top brass of the Soviet Army the second.

Comrade Kozlov everything under his control, everything under his warm wing. Except the Soviet Army. He himself is not a military man. During the Great Patriotic War he did not even serve a day as a soldier. Generals and marshals looked at him without much respect. The case of Penkovsky gave Kozlov an excuse in case of seizure of power without problems to change the leadership of the Soviet Army, putting in place of the deposed generals and marshals of his own people.

And Comrade Kozlov ordered Colonel-General Semichastny, Chairman of the KGB, to continue working against Penkovsky, but not to interfere with Penkovsky. Everything was under control - Comrade Kozlov would inform Comrade Khrushchev himself at the right moment.

Colonel-General Semichastny, Chairman of the KGB, had a sober judgment: Comrade Khrushchev, First Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party, would soon be seventy. He won't last forever. And he's giving him a hard time... The second secretary, Comrade Kozlov, is 53 years old. Officially he is the second man in the Soviet Union, but in practice he is a little more than that. And soon he'll be the first. And as soon as he becomes the first, he won't need Khrushchev's men. He'll disperse them little by little. And put his own people in charge. So why not now prove to Comrade Kozlov that Colonel-General Semichastny, the head of the KGB, is not Khrushchev's man at all, but Kozlov's man? For this purpose all that is required is to continue working against Penkovsky as ordered, not to interfere in his activities, and not to bother Comrade Khrushchev with reports for the time being.

America vastly outnumbered the Soviet Union in the number of intercontinental ballistic missiles (ICBMs). Although the whole world was convinced of the opposite.

Yes, the Soviet Union successfully launched the world's first intercontinental ballistic missile in August 1957. But to test it is one thing. But arming, setting up serial production, training personnel, creating infrastructure, and deploying missile units and formations in position areas is something else.

The United States launched the first launch later, but deployed and put its missile groups on alert earlier.

In September 1959, the Atlas D ICBM was put into service in the United States. Range - 14,500 km, charge - one and a half megatons, time of technical preparation for launch 15-20 minutes. Now the data on the range of this missile can be found different. I cite the minimum. But even this range was quite sufficient to strike the Soviet Union from the territory of the United States.

The three modifications of Atlas missiles differed slightly in their characteristics and design features, but differed very significantly in the method of basing.

Atlas D rockets were stored horizontally in hangars. Before launch, they were removed from the hangar,

were lifted into a vertical position and prepared for launch. Thirty-two launch complexes for these missiles were deployed.

The concrete vaults for the next Atlas E modification were built not on the ground, but in underground shelters. This dramatically increased the missiles' defenses in the event of a nuclear attack. The shock wave of a nuclear explosion passed over the shelter without causing harm. The same number of launch complexes of this type were deployed - 32.

And for the next Atlas F model, they built heavy-duty underground mines 80 meters deep. The shaft could withstand heavy loads even if a nuclear explosion occurred in its immediate vicinity. The missiles in the mines were stored in an upright position, ready for launch at any moment. Eighty such silos were put into operation, including 71 before the Cuban Missile Crisis.

The deployment of intercontinental ballistic missile compounds was a new and unusual endeavor that entailed a lot of risk, ambiguity, and uncertainty. Therefore, the U.S. leadership decided to insure itself by creating another intercontinental ballistic missile "Titan": let another corporation independently of the first creates something similar. The Atlas and Titan missiles were being developed in parallel.

In February 1959, the first launch of the Titan missile was carried out in the USA. The range of flight is 10,200 kilometers. Charge - 3.75 megatons. In addition to the warhead, the missile carried decoys. Circular probable deviation - no more than two kilometers. In 1960, the missile was adopted for service. Launch complexes were real underground cities with a very high degree of security. Nothing like this had been created anywhere in the world even at the beginning of the third millennium. Each launch complex - three missiles. Three such complexes - a squadron. A total of six squadrons were deployed - 54 launchers. Another launch complex with three silos was used for experimental launches and preparation of calculations. But it could also be used as a combat one.

The Titan rocket, like Korolev's 8K74 rocket, flew on kerosene and liquid oxygen. However, the Americans have the storage of the carrier, head unit, propellant and oxidizer underground. Docking head parts, refueling and preparation for launch - in underground structures of special strength. At the last moment, two flaps of 125 tons each were sliding over the shaft, the rocket was lifted to the surface and immediately launched.

In the Soviet Union, no medium-range missile (i.e., with a range of 2,000 to 5,000 kilometers), much less one with an intercontinental range (i.e., such as the U.S. Atlas and "Titan"), had no underground shelters at the time. This meant that if the Soviet Union launched a nuclear first strike, it was guaranteed to receive a retaliatory strike. But in the event of an American first strike, the Soviet Union would have nothing to retaliate with.

Meanwhile, under the rumble of Khrushchev's heel, the U.S. Congress approved appropriations for the deployment of Titan-2 intercontinental ballistic missiles. The missile had fundamentally new combat capabilities. Range - 15 thousand kilometers. Charge - 9 megatons. Fuel - long storage: refueled, lowered into the mine and do not know grief. The use of high-boiling liquid fuel allowed not only to reduce the readiness for launch to 60 seconds, but also to place the launchers at a greater distance from each other, that is, to move to a system of single launch and this sharply increase their invulnerability. One thermonuclear explosion was impossible to destroy two mines at once. And it was not so easy to destroy one mine. mines for the Titans are strong. The shaft cover weighs 740 tons. It was necessary to have a special accuracy in the immediate vicinity of the mine. It was decided to deploy three position areas of missiles "Titan-2" 18 silo launchers in each area.

And in the same years, America made a truly revolutionary leap by creating the world's first lightweight ICBM "The Minuteman is solid fueled: brought from the factory, lowered into the silo, slid the lid down - and no routine work on the missile. And you need to strike - pressed a button, the lid of the shaft flew aside, and the silver beauty went where it was prescribed. Range - 10,000 kilometers, charge of 1.2 megatons. The circular probable deviation is unbelievable - only 400 meters.

A liquid-fueled rocket contains the most complex mechanisms, assembled in factories by engineers and workers with the highest qualifications. A solid fuel rocket is, roughly speaking, a large pipe filled with a compound like resin or asphalt. Advantages: cheapness of production, ease of operation and maintenance, short time of technical preparation for launch (30 seconds), no bulky infrastructure, small number of servicing units, no means of refueling.

The Minuteman missile weighed only 30 tons, even less than that - 29.7.

It turned out to be quite small: length 16.4 meters, diameter 167 centimeters. Mines for these rockets are of small diameter, so they are more durable and cheaper.

Mines could be spread over a huge area, as the missile in principle did not require any maintenance. It was not necessary to have huge military formations to maintain these missiles. There were 50 launchers in a squadron.

And we have 40 strategic missiles, not of intercontinental but medium range - this is not a squadron or a regiment, but a division with a general at its head. There are 11,000 people in the division, including 1,900 officers, 1,700 vehicles and tractors of all kinds. And the range of our missiles is not 10, but 2-4 thousand kilometers. And all of them are not in mines, but on open, unprotected sites. And it takes 2-4 hours to prepare for launch.

Americans had 3-4 squadrons of Minuteman missiles making up a wing. It's something like our regiment or brigade. There are 2,558 men in a wing. Commanded by a colonel. The wing has 150-200 silo .

But to service such a number of missiles we have a missile army with a whole flock of generals, with headquarters and command posts, with the eternal problem of housing for officers, with low combat readiness, with equally low combat effectiveness and very high vulnerability of the entire missile group and its control systems.

Starting in November 1962, the U.S. government planned to begin deploying Minuteman missiles. And how many Minutemen did America decide to have? Exactly 1,000. Just to be on the safe side.

Khrushchev had to hurry. Khrushchev had to accomplish something before November 1962.

The problem was aggravated by the fact that in addition to the Atlas and Titan ICBMs, besides the specter of Minutemen, which were to appear in mass quantities in the near future, America had medium-range strategic missiles. 60 Thor missiles in Britain, 30 Jupiter missiles in Italy, 15 Jupiter missiles in Turkey.

These were the first generation of kerosene and liquid oxygen rockets. Range - 2,400 kilometers, charge - one and a half megatons. In terms of characteristics, they roughly corresponded to Yangel's 8K63 missile. The difference was that the Americans from the territory of Great Britain, Italy and Turkey could shoot at the Soviet Union. But the Soviet Union, having a missile with approximately the same characteristics, could not shoot at America.
There was no bridgehead.

G L A V A 15.

1

On April 23, 1962, Soviet Defense Minister Marshal Malinovsky and Deputy Defense Minister and Commander-in-Chief of the Strategic Missile Forces Marshal Moskalenko arrived at the Kremlin on an urgent call.

In Stalin's former office they were met by the First Secretary of the CPSU Central Committee, Chairman of the USSR Council of Ministers, Comrade Nikita Khrushchev, and the second man in the country, Comrade Frol Romanovich Kozlov.

Comrade Khrushchev asked about the state of affairs in the Armed Forces, and then suddenly, as if casually, inquired whether we should turn revolutionary Cuba into a bridgehead for nuclear strikes against America.

And Comrade Kozlov added: from now on we will threaten Sam!

Marshal Malinovsky was silent. He only hummed. This could be interpreted as "like": as agreement, as approval, as something vague, meaning nothing. Marshal Malinovsky was in no hurry to express his opinion ahead of his superiors, he did not like to burn bridges behind him.

And Marshal Moskalenko was not silent:

— Placing a small number of charges in Cuba makes no sense.

— And we are not a small amount, - Comrade Khrushchev resolutely said, - we will send a hundred, or even two hundred charges there. And the same number of carriers.

— And the same number of carriers," Frol Romanich, Comrade Kozlov, confirmed.

— How two hundred? - Moskalenko didn't understand.

— That's ," Comrade Kozlov explained.

— Wait a minute, Cuba is across the ocean, and the charges and carriers have to be transported by ordinary civilian ships. One missile regiment is 11,000 tons of cargo. But that's a lot of cargo. It's not like putting logs in the hold.

— We will load it carefully," assured Comrade Khrushchev.

— Very carefully," Comrade Kozlov confirmed.

— So that's how many ships it's gonna take?

— We'll allocate as much as we need.

— But how do we protect them in the ocean? How many cruisers and destroyers can we field? The U.S. fleet dominates the Atlantic; not only does it decisively outnumber the Soviet fleet, but there is also the British fleet, the Canadian fleet, and others. But even this is nonsense in comparison with the fact that the main threat to warships, and even more so to transport ships - from the air, so the experience of war teaches. They have coastal bases on both sides of the Atlantic and aircraft carriers. And we have nothing.

— We'll take it unguarded. We'll lock it in the holds, no one will know.

— Launch two hundred of our nukes into the ocean on merchant ships with nothing to protect them? And the carriers for

them? Marshal Moskalenko did not call Khrushchev-Kozlov's venture an adventure. He expressed himself more gently:

we should think about it.

It did not take long to think about it. The next day, April 24, 1962, Marshal of the Soviet Union Moskalenko was removed from the post of Deputy Minister of Defense - Commander-in-Chief of the Strategic Missile Forces and appointed Chief Inspector of the Ministry of Defense. It is an honorable job, and not even dusty. It's always easy to look for faults. Oh, I would go to inspectors, to auditors: here you have a fence that is not finished, and here you have not picked up cigarette butts!

It is clear, the chief inspector of the Ministry of Defense is cooler: here you have radioactive wastes being poured into the Barents Sea, here the taiga has been forever spoiled by carcinogenic heptyl, and the training of sergeants in training divisions is no good.

The level of the chief inspector of the Ministry of Defense is exorbitant, but the point of the work is the same as that of any inspector: to poke the nose of the negligent at shortcomings and omissions. And everyone is waiting for your visit with trepidation. And everyone is afraid of you. All look into your eyes, all trying to please you. One bad thing: the inspector is cut off from the real power. He's not the one who makes fateful decisions.

Khrushchev removed Marshal Moskalenko, in the eyes of doubt read, and who to replace him?

— Why not Biryuzov? - Comrade Kozlov suggested it.

— Why not? - Comrade Khrushchev agreed.

2

On the same day, Deputy Defense Minister Marshal Biryuzov of the Soviet Union surrendered the position of Commander-in-Chief of the country's Air Defense Forces, accepted the position of Commander-in-Chief of the Strategic Missile Forces, and received a clear order to submit considerations for the deployment of Soviet strategic missiles in Cuba in a week, and a detailed plan in a month.

Marshal Biryuzov knew that it was useless to argue: if you objected, you would be immediately removed from your new post. And Khrushchev would appoint some Vasily Ivanovich Chuikov, also, incidentally, Marshal of the Soviet Union. He will take the charges to Cuba without bothering to think about the consequences. And the carriers, too. And what will come out of it? No! We can't let fools in on this. It is necessary to accept the post of Commander-in-Chief of the Strategic Missile Forces and, being in this position, having all the information and all the management tools in hand, to do something. This event must somehow be put on the brakes. But how? We will think about how, and now we will clearly answer: Yes!

3

The Civil Air Fleet of the USSR (GVF), as the name implies, was as if civilian. But this "civilian" fleet was consistently commanded from the time of Comrade Stalin until the collapse of the Soviet Union:

• Colonel General (later Air Marshal) Astakhov,

• Air Marshal Zhavoronkov,

• Air Marshal Loginov,

• Colonel General (later Marshal and Air Chief Marshal) Bugayev.

The most important unit of the GVF was the Special Purpose Aviation Detachment (AON of the USSR GVF). Passengers were the top leaders of the Soviet Union.

On May 29, 1962, Tu-114 of this detachment delivered a group of agricultural specialists to Cuba. The group was headed by agronomist Redin (in the world - a candidate member of the Presidium of the Central Committee of the CPSU, First Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Uzbekistan Rashidov Sharaf Rashidovich). The deputy head of the group of agronomists was the land reclamation engineer Bersenev (the new Commander-in-Chief of the Strategic Missile Forces, Marshal of the Soviet Union Biryuzov Sergey Semenovich).

Comrades Khrushchev and Kozlov set a task for a group of agronomists and land reclamation workers: to persuade Comrade Fidel to agree to turn Cuba into a nuclear missile beachhead for the Soviet Union at any cost, by any threats and promises. The agronomists brought barrels of jam and baskets of cookies. They did not forget the whips: what, Fidel, defeated the counter-revolutionary landing force? Well done! And what will you do next time if we don't send you ammunition for our weapons, spare parts for our tanks, ships and airplanes?

I am explaining to you the tactics of Soviet land reclamation workers. Comrade Rashidov knew how to present the same harsh ultimatums in a gentle manner. He's an oriental man, they know how to do it in Uzbekistan. In a word, Fidel was persuaded.

4

While Soviet land reclamation workers were sharing with their Cuban colleagues their experience in increasing grain yields, things in Soviet agriculture had reached a deep and hopeless dead end.

The reason was fundamental.

The fools and criminals who seized power in a great country in 1917, went to victory under the slogan: land to the peasants! And they gave it to the peasants. They divided it according to justice: to each family according to the number of eaters. But five or six years passed, and the village was divided into the poor, the middle class and the rich.

He who got up at ten in the morning, drank moonshine at noon, danced and played the harmonica all evening, remained poor. He was always short, he could not feed himself or his family.

Those who worked hard, rose from poverty, and were able to feed their families.

He who got up before dawn, who worked all day long, became rich. He fed himself, his family and the great country.

However, this did not last long. A phenomenon emerged, which was referred to by the official term "bread-making difficulties".

What are difficulties? Let's get into the meaning of the term: there is plenty of bread, but it is difficult to prepare it. It's also

why? Yes, because industry was nationalized, that is, it was completely in the hands of the state. The state industry produced what the state needed: tanks, cannons, airplanes, submarines, steel, which was needed for the production of the same tanks, cannons and submarines, iron ore and coal, which were needed for the production of steel.... And the needs of the people were met on a residual principle. What the state did not want, the people got.

One more thing: private sale of bread is prohibited.

The only buyer of bread is the state. There is an iron monopoly that is impenetrable. And purchase prices for bread are set on the basis of state interests, i.e. terribly low.

But the only producer of industrial goods is the state. Here, too, there is an iron monopoly that is impenetrable. And here, too, the state, setting prices, proceeds from the same state interest. And it is profitable for the state to buy cheap and sell it at triple the price. That is why prices for kerosene and nails, for axes and seeders, for plows and chintz are terribly high.

This phenomenon, too, had a scientifically valid term: "price scissors."

A hard-working plowman, having earned a lot of money, looked around: what should I buy with this money? I don't need a tank, and they won't sell it. I bought a pitchfork, a shovel, a kerosene lamp and galoshes for a lot of money. And there's nothing else in the stores. So why should I sell bread and potatoes if I have nothing to buy with the money I get?

The majority of the country's population are peasants. The hard-working - hence, the rich - are millions. Why do they need such a power, which at the expense of the peoples of Russia maintains communist parties all over the world? Why this bureaucracy that devours everything that is produced by the labor of the people? Why such a system in which there is a lot of money, but nothing to buy?

As soon as a man got rich, he would immediately start to grumble, he would immediately become a

potential enemy. And this problem had to be solved.

The Kremlin geniuses found a way out: all rich men should be raskulat, that is, to take away everything they have, and they themselves should be taken in winter to the taiga, to the tundra, to the storm-blown steppes of Kazakhstan and there thrown out the cold. Let them die out. And those who resist should be shot on the spot.

A slogan was thrown to the masses: LEAVE THE CULT as a CLASS! And they did. In the

truest sense.

One of the most bitter enemies of the people was Mikhail Sholokhov. This talentless alcoholic quickly wrote a little book called "The Raised Virgin" - about how in winter the Red Army drove thousands of families with small children to their deaths. Sholokhov was delighted: don't let them get in the way of building a happy life!

During the war, Churchill visited the Soviet Union, negotiated with Stalin, and in the evenings they both had a friendly drink. And Churchill asked: how many men did you evict and throw out into the snow beyond the Urals? And he got the answer: ten million.

Many years passed, and Stalin's faithful deputy, Comrade Molotov, disagreed: no, it was not so.
"Stalin said we evicted ten million. In fact, we evicted twenty million." The hard-working men were dealt with.

They were liquidated. And then what?

And then we had to solve a twofold problem. On the one hand, to make sure that all the other men didn't get rich. Never. On the other hand, to make it so that a man did not have to pay anything at all for bread and potatoes, for butter and meat. And not to deal with each one separately, but to rake out of the public barns.

And the collective farm - the farm - was invented.

The land, of course, belongs to the peasants, as promised, but not to each one individually, but to the whole irresponsible crowd. And the cows, and the horses, and the planters - all the common things belong to the collective. There were no people willing to join the collective farm. It was necessary to force them into collective farms. All food was taken away from the men for this purpose. Everything. If you join the collective farm, we'll give you food, if you don't join, you'll starve to death. Millions died. But the collective farm system won! Now you didn't have to buy bread from a man. Now the collective farm was given a plan: to produce so much meat, so much grain, so much flax, and so many peas.

The collective farmer received no money for his labor. No money at all. He was paid in kind, as in the Middle Ages. The chairman and brigadiers counted a labor day - a workday - for performing a certain amount of work. After the collective farm fulfilled the state plan for the delivery of products, the remains of potatoes and beets, straw and hay were divided among the collective farmers in proportion to their efforts.

Slave labor is unproductive. Slave labor on earth is triply unproductive. Labor on earth is not to hew stones, pave roads, or build pyramids. Labor on the land is creativity. But all initiative in collective farms was killed, as well as personal interest in the results of labor. Not only that, the most active and
The "breakthrough" part of the remaining men immediately went into management. Yesterday's middle-aged sower became a chairman, deputy chairman, assistant or brigadier. In each of them the country lost

one breadwinner and gained another bureaucrat.

The collective farm bureaucracy behaved like any other bureaucracy in the world: it multiplied, multiplied, stole and cheated. Kolkhoz chairmen acquired telephones, secretaries, office desks, bookkeepers, cabinets with papers, head managers, sowing and harvesting schedules, plans and reports on their early fulfillment.

The foreman's favorite or the chairman's daughter was charged for something they did not do. And at whose expense? At the expense of the one who worked hard. So why should you work hard if your successes are written down to Uncle Vanya or Aunt Masha?

People will run away from such collective farms. No, citizens! We have everything in place. To prevent people from running away from collective farms, internal passports were introduced. But only for those who live in the city. A collective farmer doesn't get a passport. No, not a foreign passport. The border is locked. You can't escape from paradise. A collective farmer doesn't need an internal passport. Why would a slave need one? And without a passport, collective farmers - that is, the majority of the country's population - were not formally citizens of their country. Dogs were entitled to a passport, but a collective farmer was not. A dog could be carried in an airplane, but a collective farmer never flew in an airplane. Not for you, dear comrade, designers Tupolev and Antonov are trying. You're not fit to fly in a passenger airplane. And they didn't let collective farmers into the hotel. Cattle and collective farmers have no place there.

That's how we lived.

And so, in a country where the majority of the population was reduced to the level of slaves, who could not run away and were not paid for their work, Comrades Kozlov and Khrushchev promised life under communism, where everyone would work according to their abilities and receive according to their needs. But, having promised, they did not abolish collective farm slavery, they did not give the men land, nor did they give them internal passports, and they did not pay them with money for labor.

I repeat: Communist leaders are morons and criminals. Using the example of the promises of Comrades Kozlov and Khrushchev, try to determine what was more in our leaders: criminal impudence or ordinary stupidity?

5

But our people are clever. The country maintained a huge army to intimidate the enemy, and every year all boys of draft age were drafted into it. In the army - for three years, in the navy - for four, in other times - for five. Once a guy has served his time, it's time to go home. But the country is building new tank and missile factories, they need new metallurgical plants, and for them - new mines and mines, new power plants and railroads. The country is building. And every minister has a headache: where to get builders? We need enriched uranium. And for that we need a lot of electricity. For that we need to dam Siberian rivers with the most powerful dams in the world. And what fool would go to the taiga to the mosquitoes? No one wants to go. So the minister sends messengers to military units to recruit demobiles. And they go to Abakan and Bratsk, to Ust-Ilim and Taishet. As long as they don't go to the collective farm. On the great construction sites there are herds of young men. And girls are in short supply. There's money and shortage of everything except vodka. Vodka is easy to bring into the taiga. It's not tomatoes, it won't rot. There's drunkenness on the great construction sites, there's hooliganism of the masses of young men torn from their roots, uncontrolled by anyone. There are drunken fights over women and just for nothing, in the evenings.

There, at the construction site, the boy became an industrial or transport worker, a city dweller; there he received a passport, and no more labor days could bring him back to the collective farm.

And another move: to an officer's school. Khrushchev hit the army hard, kicking out hundreds of thousands of frontline officers without pensions, without professions, without apartments. After that, the number of those who wanted to become officers dropped dramatically. Military schools are understaffed. And guys from the village, having served a year as soldiers, are eager to go to the school. They don't need officer's epaulettes. They would like to finish the school, become officers, and after a year they can say they are sick. But not to return to the shabby collective farm.

The war knocked out the men. After the war, young men left the villages by all means. Only girls were left. But they found ways. They should marry a townie and get a passport. It's not about love, not about a strong family and the continuation of the family, but about a way to escape. And then the family fell apart - the marriage was essentially a sham.

Just as people fled from East Germany to West Germany, the Russian people were fleeing the villages by any means necessary. The village was dying out. And there were food difficulties.

6

The state pumped colossal funds into agriculture, hundreds of thousands of tractors, automobiles, combines, millions of tons of fertilizers, an incredible amount of spare parts, fuel and lubricants were sent to collective farms. Institutes and technical schools trained and sent to agriculture innumerable herds of agronomists, engineers, land reclamation specialists, zootechnicians, irrigators, veterinarians.

Agriculture was run by one dedicated secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party with a huge

staff. The Ministry of Agriculture was subordinate to him. In addition, there was the Ministry of Procurement. And the Ministry of Agricultural Machinery. И

Ministry of Machinery for Livestock and Forage Production. And the Ministry of Fertilizer Production. And the Ministry of Technical Crops. And the Ministry of Livestock. And the Ministry of State Farms. And the Ministry of Cotton Production. And the Ministry of Bread Products. And the Ministry of Horticulture. And the Ministry of Land Reclamation and Water Management.

Each republic, in addition, had its own party agricultural secretary with a huge staff and its own ministries. In every oblast and in every district, too, sat agricultural chiefs in large numbers.

The situation in agriculture was regularly discussed at the highest level: at congresses of the Communist Party and at plenums of its Central Committee. Resolutions were adopted and practical conclusions were drawn. It came to the point that the wise Communist Party by its decision adopted a grandiose Food Program, which for some reason could not be implemented.

The Communist Party sent party workers and youth, demobilized officers and cultural workers to boost agriculture. Scientific institutes and the entire Academy of Agricultural Sciences worked for agriculture. Soldiers, forgetting about combat training, workers from factories, disrupting production plans, students and schoolchildren, disrupting the educational process, were thrown into the harvest.

But! The homestead plots of the country's inhabitants occupied 2.5 percent of agricultural land and produced 51 percent of agricultural output. These miserable scraps of land accounted for 62 percent of livestock production.

What did that mean?

The picture was as follows: the entire rural population worked all day long on 97.5 percent of agricultural land, all tractors and combines, all agricultural specialists worked here, all capital investments were made here, all specialists and the entire multi-million army of soldiers, students, schoolchildren and all other helpers worked here fruitfully. And in the evening the tired man would return home and dig beds with a shovel near his house, not obeying the resolutions of congresses and plenums, not listening to the recommendations of the Academy of Agricultural Sciences, not heeding the instructions of the Central Committee, ministries, departments, regional and district committees, not listening to the orders of the chairman of the collective farm, being beyond the control of the brigadier, doing without the wise instructions of the agronomist, without a tractor and combine harvester, without fertilizers, without the help of the army and the navy. And he gave out even more than what grew on the vast fields of our great motherland.

And where did that same 2.5 percent come from?

O! Certainly not from scratch. Everything here has been calculated, scientifically substantiated and verified by decades of practice.

At first, when all the men were forced into collective farms, all the land became public property. And famine struck the country. In order to avoid hunger, it was decided to slightly weaken the collective farm oppression, to allow collective farmers to have a little bit of land in front of and behind the house - let them grow flowers. And on these scraps of land people worked nights, grew carrots and onions, potatoes and tomatoes. Here he planted apple and pear trees, gooseberries and currants. But hunger did not go away. So the plots increased little by little. And they reached the same 2.5 percent. And the country survived.

Why not give the men 3 percent of the land? Or all five! Then there would be enough for everyone. We have so much land!

No, unconscious citizens, this could not be done at all! As soon as the men were given a little more than those cherished 2.5 percent, they could do without the kolkhoz, they became free, they dug around their houses, and they did not obey the chairman. And they didn't give a damn about the decisions of congresses and resolutions of plenums, about ministers, secretaries and all other bosses, about agronomists, accountants, rationers and brigadiers.

That is why people were given land, given, given, given, and then suddenly realized: too much! And they took it away. And then the phenomena began, which were officially called by the scientific term "incomplete satisfaction of the growing needs of the population". Or "certain shortcomings in the supply of food to the population".

If the land for homestead plots is slightly underfed to men, there is nothing to eat in the country. A little too much - the people become able to feed themselves, the people become independent.

My grandfather Vasily Andreevich worked all his life as a blacksmith in the collective farm named after Shevchenko in Solonyanskiy district of Dnepropetrovsk region. My grandfather and my grandmother Irishka had a garden, a vegetable garden, a cow, and chickens running around the yard. And here was the order: cut the vegetable gardens! And behind all the houses a tractor with a plow drove by, plowed a furrow, and that land became public property, overgrown with weeds and some thorny weeds.
The collective farm doesn't need it anyway. The kolkhoz already has land for all horizons.

And then people raised productivity on the remaining scraps. And in response to this came a new wise decision of the native Communist Party: to tax all the apple trees. And then my grandfather took an axe and cut down the apple trees. The farm was called Sadovy. But after the Party's decision only poplars along the dusty road remained. The Party didn't tax the poplars. Together with my grandfather, the whole farm was cutting gardens, and together with him the whole country. It was the turn of the cows too. And then the men slaughtered their cows.

And then suddenly the huge city of Dnepropetrovsk, in which, by the way, Mikhail Yangel secretly riveted his products 8K63 and 8K65, howled from incomplete satisfaction of growing needs. And some kind of

and the people heard obscene jokes about their native party and its leadership. Through millions of snitches, this buzz reached the watchful organs and then the supreme leadership. And after long meetings, negotiations and approvals, a resolution of the Plenum of the CPSU Central Committee was issued: to add a small amount of land to homestead plots, to allow one cow in each yard, and not to tax apple trees.

Not much time would pass, the people would gain strength, and it would happen again.

2.5 percent is not a fixed value. It is the axis around which, bending and curling, the general course of the Communist Party oscillated.

7

On June 1, 1962, Comrades Khrushchev and Kozlov launched a new attack on homestead plots. Party decision: halve the homestead plots! Raise food prices! Wages in industry, construction, transportation - to lower.

The decision is right, wise, timely. The queues to the stores are huge, there is a crush, an outrage. This must be fought, because it is inconvenient in front of foreigners. If people pay less, they will buy less, and the queues will shrink. If prices are raised, the queues will become shorter. Then there will be abundance. We'll live like this. Until 1980, when everyone will have enough for everyone's needs.

On that day, June 1, 1962, at 11 a.m. in the steel shop of the electric locomotive plant in Novocherkassk, it was announced that the rates for manufactured products had been reduced by 30 percent. The plant is huge, works in three shifts, each shift has four thousand workers. In the steel shop - the hardest work. There was a break. And they announced on the radio that the Party had taken care of the population - by its wise decision it had raised the prices for meat and meat products by 30 percent, for oil - by 25 percent.
Higher prices will further develop agriculture and bring the entire population of the country closer to that bright future when there will be plenty of everything.

In those years, an engineer received 120 rubles a month. A qualified worker received 100-110 rubles. If the qualification is lower - 60-70 rubles. Cleaners, helpers - 35-40 rubles. Seven years later I, a young Guards lieutenant, received an unthinkable salary - 180 rubles: 70 rubles for the lieutenant's epaulettes and 110 rubles for the position of platoon commander. And looked down on engineers, doctors, movie actors. A bottle of vodka cost 2 rubles 87 kopecks or 3 rubles 12 kopecks. A kilogram of crappy sausage cost 2 rubles 20 kopecks. People lived in overcrowded apartments. You had to pay rent, electricity, etc. out of your paycheck. We had to feed and clothe our children.... A superpower, in a word.

But they helped Indonesia and Cuba, India and Egypt, Algeria and Syria, Mongolia, North Vietnam, North Korea and many more.

At 11 a.m. on June 1, 1962 in the steel shop of the Novocherkassk Electric Locomotive Plant there was a resonance, that is, the coincidence of the external excitation frequency with the internal frequency of the oscillating system.

Here's an example of resonance: the bridge always shakes a little bit. And there's a company walking across the bridge. A bridge is a solid structure. And the stomping of a hundred soldiers' boots is not that great a force. But if there's a coincidence of frequencies, the strongest bridge can collapse. So when you lead your company across the bridge, remember the regulations, give the command.
"Out of step!" and enforce it. There must be a difference.

The ceiling collapsed on the Russian State Duma in 1906. A fan was spinning under the ceiling of the hall. Its rhythms coincided with something there.....

On June 1, 1962, the steel shop workers got excited. All at once. And the external impact, which was the news of a new manifestation of the Party's concern for the welfare of the workers, coincided with the internal excitement. The workers gathered in groups and discussed the news. And it should be remembered that Novocherkassk is the capital of the Don Cossacks. People here are brave, proud, unruly. The break ended, but one resumed work. There was a spontaneous meeting. The workers demanded the director. The director of the plant B. N. Kurochkin could have talked to the people on a heart-to-heart basis, to calm them down, to promise them, as we know how to do, but he said something that should not have been said: "There is no money for meat - eat pies". The director obviously did not know that something similar had once been said by a high-ranking lady, and it ended with a mass beheading in the Place de la Concorde. And the head rolled at the feet of the beautiful queen...

There was another coincidence of vibrations. That's where it started. There was a railroad line near the plant. It was blocked. On the locomotive they wrote in large letters: "Khrushchev to meat". The drivers were thrown out of the booth, and the locomotive roared. And immediately after it - the factory horn roared. They hummed in two voices continuously, for hours.

A 200-strong militia arrived for the pacification. The militia has weapons for dispersal. But it has long been recognized that the cobblestone is the weapon of the proletariat. The cops were pelted with stones, bolts and nuts, and immediately, armed with steel bars, pieces of pipe, pieces of rebar, the crowd rushed at the hated guards of order. They shamefully retreated.

Army General Pliyev, commander of the troops of the North Caucasus Military District, declared a combat alert in the 18th Tank Division and brought tanks and armored personnel carriers into the streets.

For our native power, everyone is an enemy. Not a year has passed since Colonel-General Yakubovsky brought tanks into the streets of Berlin to intimidate the enemy. And before that, tanks were used to crush the people of East Germany. And Poland. And Hungary. Now the Russian people. Then there will be Czechoslovakia. Then Georgia and Lithuania. Then tanks will have to be brought to the streets of Moscow against dear Muscovites.

But that will be later. For now - Novocherkassk. I must give credit to the local leadership. The comrades immediately realized that the matter was serious. Immediately the help of Moscow was requested. The same day comrade Kozlov Frol Romanich flew to Novocherkassk. He flew on a government Il-18. By the way, it was the same "Il", which a year ago delivered from Kuibyshev to Moscow the first cosmonaut of the planet Major Gagarin Yuri Alekseevich.

Comrade Kozlov did not arrive alone. Together with him were the responsible comrades Mikoyan, Kirilenko, Shelepin, Polyansky, Ilyichev and Colonel-General Ivashutin, Deputy Chairman of the KGB.

Two more IL-18s landed next. These were the best outdoor surveillance teams of the 7th KGB Directorate. The arrivals, mingling with the crowd, searched for screamers and instigators.

Late at night the troops with the help of tanks managed to push the crowd out of the territory of the factory. And the crowd gradually dispersed. The rebels had no leadership. The rebellion was spontaneous. There were a few people who showed initiative, who could be considered instigators. They were identified by the Moscow comrades, and then by dawn they were all tied up one by one in warm cribs without a murmur.

In the morning the crowd gathered again and moved towards the building of the City Committee. The bridge over the Tuzla River was blocked by tanks. An order was received to shoot at the crowd, but the tankers, to their credit, refused to carry out this order. The crowd crossed the river ford and over the bridge through the tanks. The tankers did not obstruct. Realizing that the people were heading for the building of the city committee of the Communist Party, Comrade Kozlov and other comrades urgently fled from there, finding refuge in the military town. And the crowd went to the square.

And the shooting began.

There are two versions.

First: the Chekists who arrived from Moscow fired.

The second: abreks from the special unit of army general Pliyev were shooting.

I don't know which of these versions is correct. I'm not going to judge. But that's not the main thing. The main thing is that the shooting had not a police, but a political motive. To frighten the people - that's the task. The shooting was not accidental. It was prepared in advance. Judge for yourself: immediately dump trucks appeared on the square to remove the corpses and fire trucks that washed away the blood with water. The square was cleaned as quickly and cleanly as it could be cleaned only if they had a prior order for the appropriate preparation of people and equipment.

There can be no doubt that the decision was taken by Comrade Kozlov Frol Romanovich, of course, having coordinated it with Comrade Khrushchev. And a whole gang of party leaders of the highest rank were here only for the purpose of binding the entire leadership by bloody surety, so that later they would not poke Comrade Kozlov: you were mowing down your own people with machine-gun fire. Comrade Kozlov had an excuse for that: oh, I was not alone there, dear comrades, we have a collective leadership.

Soon the trial took place. Seven "instigators" - Alexander Zaitsev, Boris Mokrousov, Mikhail Kuznetsov, Vladimir Cherepanov, Andrei Korkach, Sergei Sotnikov, Vladimir Shuvaev - were sentenced to death and shot. 105 people received from 10 to 15 years of imprisonment with serving in a strict regime colony. The total term for all - 1341 years.

The electric locomotives produced by the rebellious plant bore its name - H8 (Novocherkassk, eight-axle). The name was changed. The electric locomotive became known as VL8. VL is Vladimir Lenin, the founder of the world's first state in which power belonged to workers and peasants.

And the signal to Khrushchev and Kozlov was that the economic problems of the Soviet Union could not be solved. So, for the internal problems of the country it is necessary to look for an external solution. And we can't delay.

G L A V A 16.

1

Lieutenant General Akandinov was appointed chief of staff of the group of Soviet agricultural specialists in Cuba. And who was to be appointed commander?

On June 10, 1962, Soviet Defense Minister Marshal Malinovsky presented several candidates for consideration to Comrades Khrushchev and Kozlov. Khrushchev looked over the short references for each and resolutely pushed the papers aside:

— And who commanded the troops that brought order to Novocherkassk last week?

— Commander of the North Caucasus Military District, Hero of the Soviet Union, Army General Pliyev.

— Let him take command in Cuba. This one will not fail.

2

On July 10, 1962, a government Tu-114 delivered a group of sugar production specialists to Cuba. The group was headed by engineer Pavlov (in the world, Army General Issa Aleksandrovich Pliev, commander of the North Caucasus Military District).

On July 12, another Tu-114 delivered a group of ameliorators to Cuba. The ameliorators were led by the commander of the 51st Missile Division of the Strategic Missile Forces, Major General of Artillery Statsenko Igor Demjanovich.

Reconnaissance groups of missile regiments arrived next.

And ours decoded the word "Cuba" in their own way: Communism off the coast of America.

3

In July 1962, the Soviet Union began strategic exercises in the strictest secrecy
"Anadyr" with the participation of formations and units of all branches of the Armed Forces, with the involvement of forces and means of the Ministry of Railways and the Ministry of the Sea Fleet.

The purpose of the exercise: to test in practice the possibility of transferring large military units and formations of all types of armaments from the central regions of the country to sea ports, to test the mobilization readiness of rail transport and merchant shipping for full-scale troop transport.

At the height of the harvest, the government demanded that the Minister of Railways allocate 21,000 railcars and a corresponding number of locomotives for the exercise.

The government has asked the Ministry of Marine to disrupt the regular voyages of 86 cargo and passenger ships and allocate them for the exercise.

— Disrupt flights for a day or two, a week, two weeks?

— Tear it up until further !

— I see," said the Minister of Marine and hung up the phone.

4

The captain of the motor ship "Omsk" was ordered to arrive in Sevastopol and receive the cargo.

Why Sevastopol? "Omsk" is a civilian vessel, while Sevastopol is a naval base, a closed port and a closed city with a special regime. All transportation on the Black Sea is via Odessa, Nikolaev, Novorossiysk. What kind of cargo can be received in Sevastopol and where can it be taken?

Orders are not negotiable. The captain carried out the order. Sevastopol is Sevastopol. Immediately two dozen good young men came aboard. The senior man introduced himself:

— I'm Ivanov. We'll be providing security.

— What kind of security?

— Well, so that no one would get hit by a hook, no one would fall overboard.

We started loading immediately. The cargo is containers.

— Where shall we go?

— Wherever they tell you to go.

The answer is exhaustive. It is our custom: when necessary, they will inform you, but only those who are directly involved in the task and only within the limits of what is required of that person to fulfill his or her duties.

The captain did not ask any more questions, but by a number of signs he soon realized that neither Ivanov nor his crew knew a damn thing either, only pretending to be knowledgeable, pretending to be mysterious.

But a little hint did accidentally slip through. One container turned out to have a broken lock. We had to check the contents and draw up an act: the container was accepted with damage, we are not responsible for its contents, at the time of acceptance it contained: ounts - 410 pairs, tents insulated for polar conditions - 80 pieces, sets of very warm clothes.... , fur coats ... , skis... , fur hats...

There was another hint: when receiving an order in the operational department of the Black Sea Fleet headquarters, the captain of the Omsk heard the code name of the exercise - Anadyr. From the scraps of conversations it followed that dozens of other ships will take part in the operation besides "Omsk". What is Anadyr? It's the capital of Chukotka. And the river flows there with the same name. Right into the Bering Sea. Through the Bering Strait - Alaska.

But there were other small and minute signs that indicated that the course was not beyond the Arctic Circle, but into the tropics. For a long time the Soviet Union had been preparing to establish communist rule in Indonesia. Comrade Khrushchev was generously sending arms there. Therefore, the way to Indonesia seemed very likely.

On the last night of loading, the ship took on board passengers - 318 guys in jackets and caps.

5

On August 5, 1962, "Omsk" gave up the ends.

The passengers are in the hold on bunks. The captain used to take convicts from Nakhodka and Vanino to Kolyma many years ago.

The port of destination is unknown. After passing the territorial waters of the Soviet Union, the captain was instructed to open the first package in the presence of "Comrade Ivanov" and the senior passenger in the crew. They went out into neutral waters, signed all three of them on the envelope, put the date and time, broke the seals, read the order: to go to the Bosporus and the Dardanelles, after entering the Mediterranean Sea to open package No. 2.

We passed the Bosporus, passed the Sea of Marmara, passed the Dardanelles, opened the second package in the same order, read the order: to go to the Atlantic Ocean, after passing Gibraltar to wait for the signal "Iceberg 135". If the signal is received, open the third package and act in accordance with the instructions contained therein.

And now we're out in the ocean. The captain reported to Moscow: Gibraltar is astern. He was answered with a word of seven letters and three figures - Iceberg 135.

The captain of the "Ivanov" summoned the senior of those young and healthy men who sleep in the hold on the bunks for all the past and all the coming sleep deprivation, they put three signatures on the package, indicated the date and time, broke five red seals, read the order: the port of destination - Mariel, the island of Cuba. Two signatures under the order - Minister of the USSR Navy Bakaev, Minister of Defense of the USSR Marshal of the Soviet Union Malinovsky.

— Hey, in the hold! Who wants boots, who wants skis?

6

All nuclear warheads of the Soviet Union - under the control of the 12th Main Directorate of the USSR Ministry of Defense (12 GU MO). Objects "C" were subordinate to this Main Directorate. Each Object "C" was a nuclear arsenal that handled the receipt, security, transportation, storage, maintenance of nuclear warheads, and their preparation for combat use. The "C" facilities stored nuclear warheads for all branches of the Armed Forces, for all nuclear weapon carriers, regardless of their affiliation and subordination.

The "C" facilities were subordinate only to the Supreme Commander-in-Chief. Only on his orders did they transfer nuclear warheads to the PRTB.

MRTB is a mobile missile-technical base, a mobile arsenal. MRBP is a military unit that is engaged in receiving, inspection, storage, maintenance, transportation and docking of head units.

For camouflage purposes, this abbreviation was decoded slightly differently - mobile repair and maintenance base. The MRBPs interact directly with missile, aviation, artillery units, surface ships and submarines that have nuclear weapons carriers in service.

It was decided to transfer to Cuba one Object C and ten PRTBs: five for the missile division of the Strategic Missile Forces, one for Army carriers, two for Air Force units, and two Navy carriers.

Such a stockpile of nuclear weapons requires carriers. In addition, all this power must be covered from the sea and from the air, all of it must be guarded and defended against a land-based enemy.

7

On May 24, 1962, exactly one month after the appointment of Marshal of the Soviet Union Biryuzov as Commander-in-Chief of the Strategic Missile Forces, the operation plan was ready, and the Minister of Defense, Marshal of the Soviet Union Malinovsky, handed it over to the highest leadership of the country. The plan was reviewed and approved. The plan was codenamed "Anadyr".

The main condition for success is to maintain secrecy.

None of the participants in the operation up to and including division commanders had any idea of its true scope. It was simple: your regiment, your division was raised on alert to take part in the exercises. The meaning of the exercise — testing the possibility of moving troops over long distances by railroad transport. And there was a lot of transportation required. One missile regiment is 11 thousand tons of cargo. For each regiment - 17-18 railroad echelons. And in addition to the five regiments there are other units in the division: headquarters, communications battalion, sapper battalion and others. There are 112 railroad echelons to move the missile division.

But the division was not alone. In addition to it - two anti-aircraft missile divisions and separate regiments in plenty. But not many people knew about it.

— Who else is participating?

— You're alone.

— Destination station?

— Vitebsk. From there, in all likelihood, you will return back.

But for some reason the train was not going to Vitebsk, but in the other direction. And in some Akhtyrka a new task was set for you - to go to Kirovograd.

One day the echelon would arrive in Sevastopol (or Baltiysk, Nikolaev, Murmansk, Poti, Liepaja), and here the order was given to unload. The ports were cordoned off. All communication between the exercise participants and the outside world was cut off from that moment on: no phone calls, no telegrams or letters could be sent.

The participants in the exercises are not supposed to know how many and which troops are involved. Everyone sees only his battalion, his regiment, his headquarters - and nothing more. And the exercises are in full swing. The next stage is loading onto ships, with training purposes, of course. Don't worry: you will be loaded and immediately unloaded.

But after loading, they announced not unloading, but a training trip to the sea to check in real conditions the reliability of fastening equipment.

The exercise was dragging on: from the Baltic Sea to the Atlantic Ocean, from the Black Sea to the Mediterranean, and then to the ocean. It was only here that it was announced that the exercises were over and the combat routine had begun - we were going to Cuba.

On August 5, 1962, the first of 86 ships put to sea.

On August 11, 1962, the Vostok-3 spacecraft with cosmonaut Andrian Nikolayev was launched in the Soviet Union. The next day, Vostok-4 with cosmonaut Pavel Popovich was launched.

Once again, we were ahead of the curve. The first ever group flight of two spaceships! The world rejoiced.

BIRYUZOV SERGEY SEMENOVICH born in 1904. At the age of 18 voluntarily joined the Red Army. Graduated from the military school in the Kremlin. Commanded a platoon and a company. Then - chief of staff of a battalion, battalion commander. Graduated from the military academy. He was chief of staff of a division. He entered the war as a major-general, commander of the 132nd Infantry Division, which was secretly moving to the borders. The war went not according to Stalin's scenarios, but according to Hitler's plans. The division fell into encirclement, but Major-General Biryuzov managed to withdraw it, saving most of the personnel, weapons and military equipment. During the Stalingrad strategic offensive operation Manstein's group tried to unblock the encircled group of German troops in the Stalingrad area. On the direction of the main blow Stalin put forward the 2nd Guards Army under the command of Lieutenant General Malinovsky; the Chief of Staff - Major General Biryuzov. The 2nd Guards Army prevented attempts to break through to the encircled German troops in the Stalingrad area.

Biryuzov then commanded an army and the front headquarters. He finished the war with the rank of Colonel-General. After Stalin's death, he took part in a plot to overthrow the deputy head of the Soviet government, Marshal of the Soviet Union Beria. Biryuzov was a man from Khrushchev's inner circle.

In 1955 he was appointed Commander-in-Chief of the Air Defense Forces of the country and was promoted to Marshal of the Soviet Union.

In 1962, he was appointed Commander-in-Chief of the Strategic Missile Forces with the task of immediately preparing and conducting an operation to deploy a Soviet missile grouping in Cuba. He coped with the task. However, remembering 1941, he was looking for ways to prevent a catastrophe. He shared his doubts with his colleague, Chief Marshal of Artillery Varentsov.

So another member of the Serov-Varentsov conspiracy was added.

G L A V A 17.

1

The most secret, the most vulnerable, the most guarded and protected element of the grouping of Soviet troops in Cuba was Object "C" (Zh 713), which was commanded by Colonel Beloborodov, later Lieutenant General.

Object "C" transferred to Cuba stored, maintained and prepared for combat use all nuclear charges: aircraft bombs, cruise missile warheads, torpedoes, ballistic missiles, both strategic and tactical.

From Object C, nuclear charges were delivered to ten mobile missile-technical bases (MRTBs), which delivered the charges to the carriers, docked them, and prepared them for combat use. Five MRTBs were used to provide nuclear charges to five strategic missile regiments, and another five MRTBs were used to provide charges to carriers for aviation, fleet, and ground forces.

The main striking force of the grouping of Soviet troops in Cuba is the 51st combined rocket division of Major-General of Artillery Igor Demjanovich Statsenko. The missile division has five regiments:

• Three regiments had 8K63 missiles (range 2,100 kilometers, charge 1 megaton). Each regiment had 8 launchers and one and a half warheads, i.e. 12 carriers. In total, the three regiments have 24 launchers, 36 combat missiles and 36 charges to them. In addition, each regiment had two live-fire missiles, which were used for training, but could also used as live carriers if necessary.

• Two regiments had 8K65 missiles (range 3,200 kilometers with a heavy charge of 2.3 megatons or 4,500 kilometers with a light charge of 1 megaton). Each regiment also has 8 launchers and one and a half ammunition packs, in addition to two live-fire missiles. In total, these two regiments have 16 launchers, 24 8K65 live and 4 live-fire missiles, 16 1-megaton charges, 8 2.3-megaton charges.

The division has a total of 11,000 men, including 1,900 officers, 1,695 vehicles for various purposes, 60 combat and 10 combat-training carriers, 52 charges of 1 megaton each, 8 charges of 2.3 megatons each. Total - 70 megatons.

The 32nd Guards Fighter Aviation Regiment and two antiaircraft missile divisions, the 12th and 27th, covered the areas of Site C, ten PRTBs, the 51st Missile Division's launch positions, command posts, and airfields. Each division had three anti-aircraft missile regiments, a missile-technical base and a radio-technical battalion. The radio-technical battalions have P-30 radars. In each anti-aircraft missile regiment.
— 24 launchers of S-75 missiles. In a division - 72. Two divisions have 144 launchers. And five sets of missiles.

The 32nd Guards Fighter Regiment has 40 MiG-21F-13s. This is one of the most famous Soviet aviation regiments. In 1943, this regiment was commanded by Colonel Stalin Vasily Iosifovich.

The following units were transferred from the Air Force to Cuba: a squadron of bombers carrying nuclear weapons (6 IL-28A aircraft), two regiments of front-line cruise missiles (16 launchers and 80 FKR-1 missiles with nuclear charges), and a helicopter regiment (33 Mi-4 helicopters).

Four separate reinforced motorized rifle regiments and three divisions of Luna tactical missiles were transferred to Cuba from the Ground Forces to protect and defend command posts, communications centers, warehouses and storage facilities, airfields, and positions of the missile and two anti-aircraft missile divisions.

Each motorized rifle regiment has one tank and three motorized rifle battalions, a reconnaissance and sapper company, an anti-aircraft, mortar and two anti-tank batteries.

One of these regiments was commanded by Colonel Dmitry Timofeyevich Yazov. Three decades later he would become Marshal of the Soviet Union, Minister of Defense of the USSR. Marshal Yazov testified many years later that his motorized rifle regiment had one hundred vehicles just for ammunition transportation.

In case of necessity, fire support to motorized rifle regiments could be provided by missile divisions - with 3P9 tactical missiles, and if necessary, with 3P10 with nuclear charges.

A total of 54,000 soldiers and officers disguised in Cuban military uniforms or civilian clothing were planned to be transferred to Cuba during Operation Anadyr.

But in addition to the "Anadyr" plan, the "Kama" plan was approved, according to which the 5th Fleet under the command of Vice-Admiral Abashvili Georgi Semenovich was to be deployed in Cuba. The fleet consisted of 2 cruisers, 2 missile and 2 artillery destroyers, 12 missile boats, 11 diesel submarines (4 torpedo boats and 7 missile boats), 8 auxiliary vessels, an aviation torpedo-bearing regiment (30 Il-28T aircraft), and a regiment of 4K87 coastal anti-ship cruise missiles.

2

The transfer of such masses of people and a huge amount of sophisticated combat equipment was practically lossless. Only 18 soldiers and officers died from the infernal heat in the iron holds. The statute requires to endure the hardships and deprivations of military service. Those 18 didn't. But tens of thousands survived!

Small losses during transportation, understandably, did not bother anyone. Another thing was of concern. Civilian ships going to Cuba, all the people in the holds. Crammed in like sprats in a can. That's how slave traders used to transport black slaves from Africa to the sugar plantations of the New World. But the ships were wooden back then. They didn't get so hot in the tropical sun.

Nothing on our ships, as they say, is sticking out. But why do American warships march in wolf packs alongside our seemingly peaceful merchant ships? Why are airplanes roaring over the masts? What could have alarmed them? What could have alarmed them?

American warships on the ocean asked the captains of Soviet merchant ships: what are you carrying? International law protects merchant ships in neutral waters. The flag of the Soviet Union is on the mast and the ship's side is the sovereign territory of the USSR. No one has the right to infringe on our independence. An attempt to stop a merchant ship in neutral waters, to attack, to check the cargo is a violation of international law and an act of war. An attack on both warships and merchant ships is tantamount to an attack on the country whose flag they carry. For this reason, Soviet captains responded to inquiries with silence: it's none of your damn business, we are carrying what we need.

But why the hell did those damned Americans get suspicious? The Soviet Union used to ship millions of tons of oil and wheat, buses, tractors and bulldozers, pipes and cement, machine tools and rebar to Cuba, and no one asked questions. They also carried other cargo: tanks IS-2 and T-34-85, Su-100 self-propelled vehicles, MiG-15 fighters.
They also transported more modern equipment for Fidel's army. And again, no one cared, no one bothered. Suddenly there's a lot of attention. Why would that be?

American destroyers are almost side by side, reconnaissance planes are about to knock off the tops of masts.

On September 12, 1962 at 4 a.m. Moscow time on the approach to the port of Nicaro over the masts of the dry cargo ship "Leninsky Komsomol" was twice passed by an unmarked airplane. On the next approach the stranger crashed into the water and sank.

The incidents were multiplying. Such cases were ordered to be reported personally to Comrade Kozlov Frol Romanovich.

3

Back on August 29, 1962, an American U-2 reconnaissance plane (him again!) at an altitude of 21,000 meters passed over the areas where the 12th and 27th anti-aircraft missile divisions were being deployed. Decoding of the images left no doubt: it was something familiar - an artificial hill in the middle and six circles around it. On the hill is a receiving and transmitting cabin, a container on a rotating base with three huge plates. And the circles around the hill are sites for launchers of S-75 surface-to-air missile systems. The hill and the six circles are an anti-aircraft missile division. Here's one. Here's the second, here's the third, here's the fourth. Four divisions - anti-aircraft missile regiment. We counted more than 20 divisions. More than a hundred launchers. So, not one anti-aircraft missile division, but more. Anti-aircraft missiles are air defense. But defense of what? Havana is the capital of the Cuban revolution. It's not covered by anti-aircraft missiles.
Anti-aircraft missiles cover sparsely populated areas, palm groves. Why?

On October 4, 1962, the diesel-electric ship Indigirka delivered nuclear warheads for 8K63 carriers to the port of Mariel.

On October 14, 1962, a U-2 reconnaissance plane took pictures of newly equipped Soviet positions. Careful study of the pictures and further aerial reconnaissance revealed strange long tarpaulin shelters at the positions. Next to one shelter was a cluster of special vehicles. What's that? There's another one a couple kilometers away. Also a cluster of vehicles. And they're arranged in the same order, forming the same pattern.

The decoding of the images led American experts to draw an undeniable conclusion: the Soviet Union deployed 8K63 strategic missiles in Cuba. If the Soviet Union deploys 8K65 in Cuba as well, virtually the entire U.S. territory will be in the crosshairs of Soviet strategic missiles.

The American government has never explained the reason that made the decision to race reconnaissance planes over Cuba's palm groves.

And the box was easy to open. The U.S. government had been warned about what to look for and where.

The Americans were not just looking for Soviet missiles exactly where they were. They also took completely unheard-of measures to deploy their own missile group. From June 1 to October 22, 1962, 82 intercontinental ballistic missiles were put on combat duty in addition to the previously commissioned missiles: 36 Atlas, 36 Titan-2 and, breaking all records, the first 10 Minuteman missiles ahead of schedule.

4

On the evening of October 21, 1962, something happened that neither American nor Soviet newspapers reported. The new Soviet ambassador to the United States, Anatoly Dobrynin, was summoned to the State Department, where he was handed a note from the U.S. government demanding the immediate removal of strategic missiles and all nuclear charges from Cuba. The note was urgently transmitted to Moscow. At this time in Moscow, the next day, October 22, had already arrived. A secret council was assembled in the Kremlin, which included the five most important leaders - comrades Khrushchev, Kozlov, Brezhnev, Kosygin, and Mikoyan. The question was discussed: could the Americans know about the transfer of missiles and charges to Cuba, and if they knew about it, how?

Soviet Defense Minister Marshal Malinovsky and First Deputy Defense Minister and Chief of the General Staff Marshal Zakharov were summoned to respond. Both firmly stood their ground: everything had been done correctly, the Americans could not know about the missile deployment, if they demanded that the missiles and charges be removed, it was simply a diplomatic move. Perhaps they have some hunches and suspicions, and they are issuing an ultimatum to check how we will react.... To take the gun, to scare us.

After that, Colonel General Semichastny, Chairman of the KGB, was summoned. He was asked the same question: could the Americans know about Soviet strategic missiles in Cuba, and if they knew about it, how?

The head of the punitive bodies was quite surprised at this question: of course, the Americans know everything, there is a leak of top secret information from the top military leadership of the Armed Forces, the transmitting link is Colonel Oleg Vladimirovich Penkovsky of the GRU, who is under the most careful observation, about this in writing back in December last year reported to Comrade Kozlov. Didn't he inform you?

Comrades Khrushchev, Brezhnev, Kosygin and Mikoyan amicably turned to Comrade Kozlov: Frol Romanich, is it true?

5

Frol Romanovich Kozlov, a member of the Presidium of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, Second Secretary of the CPSU Central Committee, was taken to a medical facility for especially responsible comrades under the howling of sirens. His heart is not iron, it failed him.

At the same moment, Colonel Oleg Penkovsky was seized on the street and taken to a punitive institution for especially dangerous enemies of the communist regime under the howling of sirens.

On the same day, October 22, 1962, U.S. President John Fitzgerald Kennedy, having received no response from Moscow to the secret ultimatum, put all U.S. Armed Forces on alert, announced the quarantine of the island of Cuba in 48 hours and addressed the nation with a message: the fatherland is in danger!

6

The interrogation of Penkovsky began immediately.

The first and most important thing for a toothy investigator is to break the "client" morally. The investigator has a huge arsenal of methods, techniques and means that have been tested for hundreds of years. The simplest, the most harmless and the safest method of influence is to undress the client completely and interrogate him in this form. They can also walk down the corridors before questioning, and up and down the stairs.

You'd think, what's the big deal? It seems

like nothing.

But you should try it for yourself. There are people who enjoy this state of mind. They run naked across the stadium fields right at the opening of the Olympic Games in front of a billion TV viewers. But they are in the minority. And the majority of citizens of our planet in terrible dreams see a terrible situation: everyone is dressed as it should be, and only he, seeing the dream, naked among them running. A person wakes up in panic and realizes with relief that it is just a dream.

Colonel Penkovsky was undressed as soon as he was pushed into the "reception room" of Lubyanka. And after undressing, he was led down the marble lobbies and granite staircases under the whispering and surprised looks of those who met and crossed him. Lubyanka is not surprised by anything. But even in its corridors naked detainees are led around not every day.

7

Meanwhile, the Cuban Missile Crisis was gaining momentum.

It is commonly believed that U.S. President John F. Kennedy declared a blockade of the island of Cuba. But that is not the case. In accordance with international law, the declaration of a naval blockade is tantamount to a declaration of war. Therefore, the blockade was not declared. A quarantine was declared: all merchant ships were subjected to inspection; if they were carrying peaceful cargoes, they were allowed to pass, if they were carrying military cargoes, they were detained.

And there was much to delay. Forty-four thousand Soviet soldiers and officers and a huge amount of equipment arrived in Cuba, including:

• 36 megaton-class thermonuclear charges for 8K63 medium-range strategic missiles;

• 36 nuclear charges for FKR-1 cruise missiles;

• 6 bombs of 6 kilotons each for Il-28A aircraft;

• 12 charges of 2 kilotons each for 3P10 tactical missiles;

• 6 charges for 4K87 coastal anti-ship missiles.

That's a lot, but it's not everything.

The main transport with charges was expected to arrive. The main forces were concentrated, but lacked a key element - 8K65 missiles. The 51st Missile Division has five regiments: three regiments of 8K63 missiles and two regiments of the more powerful 8K65 missiles. The three regiments of 8K63s have arrived, unloaded and deployed, while the two regiments of 8K65 missiles are still in the ocean.

On October 23, 1962, one day after the President's televised address to the American people (and to the leaders of the Soviet Union), motor ship Aleksandrovsk arrived at the port of La Isabella with a most valuable cargo:

24 thermonuclear charges for the most powerful 8K65 missiles and 44 nuclear charges for FCD-1 cruise

missiles. The total number of nuclear charges in Cuba at the beginning of the open phase of the crisis was 164.

But the unexpected happened: the most powerful thermonuclear charges for the 8K65 carriers are already in Cuba, but the missiles themselves are still in the ocean.

The quarantine went into effect at 10 a.m. on October 24, 1962.

What are we supposed to do?

There were no options: 23 Soviet cargo ships, including four carrying 8K65 missiles, were ordered to return to the Soviet Union.

On October 22, 1962, as the Cuban Missile Crisis entered its open and decisive phase, the Soviet Union had virtually no intercontinental ballistic missiles, although it persistently boasted of them. Five 8K74 missile launch complexes could be used against the United States: one at Tyura-Tam, four at Plesetsk. However, the complexes were extremely vulnerable, because they were huge open stationary structures, approximately the same as those from which manned spacecraft were launched. Around these complexes was deployed a powerful and extremely vulnerable infrastructure, including oxygen plants. The 8K74 missiles were stored in hangars and took a long time to prepare for launch. These systems could have been used against the United States, but the 8K74 missiles were never on active duty.

By the time of the crisis, the Soviet Union had the 8K64 intercontinental ballistic missile high-boiling components. This is the same product that in October 1960 rumbled on launch, turning into white ashes the Commander-in-Chief of the Strategic Missile Forces, Chief Marshal of Artillery Nedelin, the launch crew and a group of leading designers at the Southern Machine-Building Plant. In October 1962, 19 such missiles could be used against America. All of them were launched only from open, unprotected launchers and required a long time to prepare for launch. The problem was that these missiles, although already produced by industry, had not yet been adopted by the Rocket Forces because of many unresolved problems large and small.
By government decree, ICBM 8K64 was put into service 9 months after the crisis - on July 15, 1963. But the following year, 1964, the missile was recognized as obsolete, although it remained in service for another 13 years.

At the same time, the U.S. had 253 intercontinental ballistic missiles in service: 135
"Atlas", 108 "Titan-1" and "Titan-2", 10 Minuteman". All Titans and Minutemen, as well as 71 Atlas missiles
— in silo launchers. In addition, the Americans could fire medium-range missiles at the Soviet Union from Britain, Italy, and Turkey. A total of 105 launchers of Thor and Jupiter medium-range ballistic missiles were deployed in these countries.

At the time of the crisis, the U.S. Navy had 9 nuclear missile submarines, each carrying 16 ballistic missiles with a range of 2,200 kilometers and the ability to launch instantly from underwater. The boats were based in Spain and the UK. Once out of the base or even while at the base, they could launch missiles. These boats operated in waters where Soviet anti-submarine aviation did not and could not exist, where they were reliably protected from possible actions of Soviet anti-submarine ships.

The Soviet Union at that time had five Project 658 nuclear missile submarines, each carrying three

4K50 liquid-propellant missiles with a range of 600 kilometers, with a surface launch. But one of these boats, the K-19, was undergoing a lengthy overhaul after an accident in the Atlantic Ocean. Another, K-33, was preparing to go into repair; it was driven into dock at the moment of crisis - October 25, 1962. Three remained: K-16, K-40 and K-55. To strike the U.S., these boats had to make a long crossing of the ocean, surfacing off the U.S. coast - where the dominance of U.S. aircraft and fleet was overwhelming - and after 15-20 minutes of preparation to launch.

In addition, the Soviet Union had 19 Project 629 diesel-electric missile submarines with the same armament - three 4K50 missiles and six torpedoes each. These boats faced all the same problems: to strike the United States, they had to first cross the Atlantic or Pacific Ocean, then surface near American shores, refuel the missile, raise it above the deckhouse, and launch it. The problem was complicated by the fact that the submarine speed of Project 629 boats is 12 knots. If chased at top speed, then even then the transition to one side and to the other took too much time, drastically reducing the time of being on combat duty. That is why it was decided to transfer seven such boats to Cuba. But they had not yet arrived at the time of the crisis.

In October 1962, two types of Soviet strategic bombers could reach America: the 3M and the Tu-95. Both could only fly at subsonic speeds.

According to various estimates, there were between 68 and 152 of them at that time (in the nuclear weapons carrier variant).

The United States had the capability to launch nuclear strikes against the Soviet Union with supersonic B-58A strategic bombers. There were 115 of them at the time of the beginning of the open phase of the Cuban Missile Crisis. During it, on October 26, 1962, three more machines of this type entered service.

The U.S. Navy could launch nuclear strikes against the Soviet Union with the A-5 Vigilante heavy supersonic deck attack aircraft. At the time of the crisis, there were 57 of them. Two types of these supersonic aircraft were intended to clear the way for the bulk of the bombers, that is, to suppress the air defense system in selected directions. After that, hundreds of B-47 and B-52 strategic bombers came into action.

To this we must add that the Soviet Union could have been bombed by the entire tactical air force of the United States and numerous allies.

In June 1991, two months before the collapse of the Soviet Union, the USSR Ministry of Defense admitted that in October 1962, the United States had 17 times more nuclear warheads than the USSR ("Military History Journal," 1991, No. 6, p. 66).

G L A V A 18.

1

On October 22, 1962, humanity came to the brink of self-destruction for the first time in its history.

Secret meetings between spies and diplomats continued for several days, the brother of the U.S. President met with the Soviet Ambassador, governments exchanged telegrams ... Soviet Foreign Minister Comrade Gromyko desperately lied that there were no Soviet missiles in Cuba, and the Soviet Ambassador to the United States, Comrade Dobrynin, and the USSR Permanent Representative to the United Nations, Comrade Zorin, sang along.

Then the Americans showed the whole world pictures: what's that sausage under the palm trees? And what's that? Let's send an international commission to this place to see if it's a beer barrel of eighteen meters.

And we had to admit that yes, there was something in part. And again there are negotiations, secret meetings between the spies of the two countries, diplomatic notes, assurances and statements. And the U.S. president has his hand on the button. And some of his advisers are pushing him under the elbow: press it, or you will lose!

John Kennedy had had enough of all this, and it was announced that he would soon address the nation with an important message. What could the U.S. president tell his people and the world at that moment? Only that he was moving to decisive action.

Khrushchev shuddered.

In an open text directly on the radio, Khrushchev addressed America: I'm taking the missiles away! That's it! The end of the crisis!

And in order not to lose face completely - small conditions: if you do not touch Cuba, if you take your missiles from Turkey.

— So be it," Kennedy replied.

2

The Soviet contingent was quickly withdrawn from Cuba. Fighter planes and armored personnel carriers, missiles and charges, artillery pieces and bombers were taken out. The missiles were loaded onto ships in a hurry, turning them into scrap metal. Any dent meant that such a missile could not be launched. And there were plenty of dents, abrasions and nicks.

MiG-21 fighters, Il-28 bombers and torpedo-carriers were loaded onto the decks of Soviet merchant ships under the watchful eyes of American inspectors. And you could not load them, but smash them with sledgehammers on the spot or drown them in the sea. When they returned home, they still had to be written off.

Leaving Cuba was humiliating. The Soviet soldiers left like misbehaving schoolchildren, to the whistling and hooting of American sailors, to the roar of reconnaissance planes, which, now unashamedly, were flying over loading areas, over stunted groves, which not so long ago were called by the formidable term PPR - field position areas.

You're leaving on a slow, slow-moving, slow-moving dry cargo ship. The holds are full of weapons that were so formidable yesterday. But you are defenseless and unarmed. And next to it is a sleek gray American destroyer, and the captain's teeth are grinning insolently, and the sailors are contemptuously throwing cigarette butts overboard, spitting squeamishly....

3

And here it's time to ask the question: why did Khrushchev bring missiles to Cuba in the first place?

Any wisest official historian will explain to us clearly: if you shoot from Cuba, you reduce flight time. The suddenness of the strike is the gain!

The explanation is convincing, but only to those who have not understood the situation.

A missile strike from the Soviet Union could more or less be a surprise attack. Understandably, provided you have something with which to launch such a strike.

In 1962, there were no means of fighting ballistic missiles, nor were there any reliable means of detecting missiles coming at you. The last stage or even just the warhead of a missile would suddenly appear at wild speeds over the horizon. It didn't make much difference whether they were coming from long range or short range.

But! If a missile is being prepared for launch in the Siberian taiga, you see this preparation. The territory is huge, the missile location areas are wild, deserted, and well guarded. Information about the missile strike arrives at your command post at the moment when the combat parts of Soviet missiles, like , appeared on your horizon. If you have time, press the retaliatory strike buttons. But there is nothing you can do to stop the missiles coming at you.

And it was impossible to launch a surprise strike with 8K63 and 8K65 missiles from Cuba. On the island of Cuba, Soviet missiles were extremely vulnerable BEFORE launch. If a missile strike was being prepared, it would have been necessary to simultaneously raise several dozen missiles to a vertical position, fuel them for hours and prepare them for launch. In this case the missiles would have risen above the crowns of palm trees, they would have been visible from afar.

The missiles' position areas were in densely populated, heavily rugged terrain with sparse vegetation. If the missiles are in the lowlands, they can be seen from the heights. If on the heights, they can be seen from the lowlands. Peasant farms had to be evicted to accommodate the missiles. The peasants showed their discontent and asked questions: what going on in our plantations? The Communist leadership of Cuba had many enemies at that time. In the countryside, sabotage squads were active, sent to Cuba in preparation for Operation Mongoose, which aimed to seize the island and overthrow the Castro regime.

In the case of simultaneous lifting of dozens of strategic missiles into a vertical position, many people would know about it at once. And then the missiles could be bombed, shot at from the ground, from the sea and from the air. One bomb fragment, one sniper's bullet, one saboteur's grenade would put the whole missile out of action. Around each missile there is a whole pandemonium of unprotected people and machines, an accumulation of cables, hoses, pipelines. There are corrosive, toxic and flammable components. The failure of even one machine made it impossible to prepare the entire rocket for launch. A fire on one machine threatened the entire launch complex and its combat crew with disaster.

In the final hours before launch, the defeat of the Soviet missile force in Cuba could be carried out from aircraft carriers, other U.S. surface ships and submarines, from Florida or the U.S. Guantanamo Bay base. While the Soviet missiles in Cuba are being raised to a vertical position and prepared for launch, the U.S. government could order a counter-strike with its missiles against both the Soviet Union and Cuba.

With missiles stationed in Cuba, flight times were shortened, but this did not make the strike sudden. On the contrary, the enemy could detect preparations for a missile strike hours before Soviet operators pressed the "Launch" buttons.

The missiles on the territory of the Soviet Union could only be destroyed by a surprise missile strike, i.e. during World War III. And in Cuba, they could be destroyed with , even a shotgun blast.

4

And then the Kremlin propaganda came up with another beautiful answer to the question of why the missiles were in Cuba. The answer is as follows: Nikita Khrushchev was in Bulgaria, and someone told him that over there, in neighboring Turkey, there are American missiles aimed at the Soviet Union.... So Khrushchev was indignant, got indignant, decided to place missiles in Cuba as a counterweight, and then to exchange: you take them from Turkey, we take them from Cuba... Khrushchev saved the Cuban revolution with this move.

It sounds great too for those who don't get it.

And anyone who thinks with his head will ask the question: Why do we need this Cuba? Why do we need this A "freedom island" from which people are fleeing, being shot in the backs of their heads and backs?

If the Soviet Union does not aspire to world domination, if it is not trying to spread communism throughout the world, why do we need Cuba? And Indonesia, Algeria, Iraq, Syria, Egypt, Nicaragua, Chile, Angola, Mozambique, Vietnam, Korea, China, Yemen, Guinea-Bissau, Mongolia, Libya, Afghanistan, Somalia, Ethiopia, and so on and so forth. And why keep the Communist Party of the USA, and France, and Great Britain, and all sorts of Uruguayans with Paraguayans?

And if we wanted to preserve this very "revolution," why take missiles to Cuba? The whole world at that time knew about and believed in Soviet missile superiority. President Kennedy had publicly declared the American missile gap. This was the time to capitalize on this general misconception! He should have announced to the world at the UN Assembly: in case of an attack on Cuba, the Soviet Union would respond with a nuclear missile attack on America from Siberia! And what U.S. president would plan an invasion after that? That Cuba is burning with fire! To hell with it and its revolution. Forget it and forget it!

So here's the question: isn't one left wondering which missiles to threaten - the ones allegedly in Siberia or the ones actually in Cuba?

And if you want to put it in Cuba, why so many? Here's one for Washington, one for New York, one for Chicago. Just to be sure, a couple for each target. Who's gonna want to attack your Cuba after that? So why tens of thousands of troops? Why 164 charges? They were planning on bringing in more, but they didn't have time.

The most interesting thing is that the Soviet Union never threatened America with these missiles. On the contrary, both Khrushchev, Foreign Minister Comrade Gromyko, the ambassador to the United States, and the representative to the United Nations lied that there were no missiles in Cuba!

However, it is interesting: they placed missiles under palm trees in order to frighten America and save poor Cuba, but they did not frighten it, on the contrary, they calmed it down: don't be afraid, we don't have missiles here!

, the missiles were not brought to Cuba to save Fidel Castro and his regime. The purpose was different.

5

A completely ridiculous explanation about American missiles in Turkey. It was because of them that everything started. Khrushchev found out that if missiles from Turkey are launched, they will be in the Soviet Union in a few minutes. And Nikita decided that it was necessary to end this outrage, we must force the Americans to remove these missiles.

All right. We'll agree. But Turkey had 15 missiles. And Italy and Great Britain had 90 more with the same characteristics. If 15 were removed and 90 remained, would that make Khrushchev feel better?

Was it really necessary to bring the world to the brink of World War III because of those fifteen missiles? And there are 144 Polaris with much higher performance and many times less vulnerable on nine nuclear missile submarines in the Atlantic and the Mediterranean.

Why did the 15 missiles in Turkey excite Khrushchev so much, but the much larger numbers in Britain, Italy, the Atlantic and the Mediterranean Sea did not?

And if it's all about balancing 15 missiles in Turkey, why bring a missile division, two surface-to-air missile divisions, two regiments of frontline cruise missiles and a regiment of anti-ship missiles to Cuba? Why the IL-28 bombers? Why the 164 charges? Why the 5th Fleet with cruisers and submarines?

If it's all removing 15 missiles from Turkey, why lie to the UN?

As soon as the Americans found out about our missiles in Cuba, as soon as they announced it to the whole world, they should have categorically declared: Yes! Our missiles are in Cuba! Get out of Turkey and we will get out of Cuba!

Who would object to that? Who would condemn the peace-loving Soviet

Union? But ours lied, shamelessly and brazenly: we have no missiles in

Cuba!

Let us assume for a moment that Soviet missiles were brought to Cuba in order to force America to remove its missiles from Turkey. But at the same time, the Soviet missiles were brought in so that no one would know about it, so that America would not react in any way to their appearance, therefore, it would not remove its missiles from Turkey....

6

When it got hot, when publicly accused of lying, Khrushchev remembered about missiles in Turkey: well, I take Soviet missiles from Cuba, but you also take ...

But he could have demanded that they remove not only Turkey, but, for example, Italy as well. Why not?

Khrushchev could have demanded 60 missiles be removed from Britain. They would have! No one would have objected.

Here's the point. The United States had dramatically surpassed the Soviet Union in the field of solid fuel missiles. That is why the Americans could afford to launch two grandiose programs at once: the mass construction of nuclear missile submarines, 16 Polaris missiles on each, and Minuteman missiles in silos.

In 1962, both of these programs had already borne abundant fruit. And by the end of 1963, 450 Minuteman solid fuel missiles in silos and 256 Polaris solid fuel missiles on 16 nuclear missile submarines were on active duty. The last six boats are of the new Lafayette type with a new variant of Polaris A-2 missile. Deployment of Minuteman program and construction of nuclear missile (as well as torpedo) submarines continued at the same frantic pace.

In 1962, everyone who wanted to know about it knew that such a leap in US missile armament was going to happen in 1963. No one was hiding these programs. These programs were openly and heatedly discussed in Congress and in the press. Against the background of such a rapid development of solid fuel rockets, liquid-propellant missiles "Thor" and "Jupiter" no longer looked as effective weapons as before. The Americans didn't need them anymore. Liquid fuel rockets have so many disadvantages: it takes a long time to prepare for launch, you have to maintain a lot of people with high qualifications, a whole horde of all kinds of machines, expensive and complex launch complexes, which are too vulnerable ....

And it was decided back in 1961 to remove the Thor and Jupiter medium-range missiles from service in two years and to remove them from Great Britain, Italy and Turkey. The fact that in 1963 the missiles would be removed not only from Turkey, but also from Italy and Great Britain, was known not only in the Kremlin and the General Staff. Anyone who could read English could find out about it.

So, Khrushchev did not deploy his missiles in Cuba so that the Americans would remove 15 missiles from Turkey. They would have removed them a year later. And not just from Turkey. Was it necessary to bring the world to the very edge of nuclear suicide at the end of 1962, if it was reliably and in advance known that the problem with missiles in Turkey would be resolved by itself in early 1963?

Our propaganda immediately turns any defeat into a victory. It was announced then (and not the wisest repeat it even half a century later) that:

• First, we saved revolutionary Cuba from imminent invasion;

• Second, obliged the U.S. to remove missiles from Turkey;

• third, forced the damn Americans from confrontation to peaceful coexistence.

It's all nonsense.

Was Comrade Fidel Castro, nicknamed the Stallion in Cuba, was his whole "revolution" on the island of taverns, gambling houses, drug addiction and prostitution worth destroying the whole world for their sake, along with Fidel himself and his revolution?

Was it worth risking the lives of humanity for the sake of 15 missiles in Turkey, which should have been removed anyway?

And peaceful coexistence would have been better left unmentioned. After the Cuban Missile Crisis, an arms race unheard of in the history of mankind broke out. The Americans deployed 1,000 Minuteman missiles, put into service 41 nuclear missile submarines, 16 Polaris each, and created new strategic bombers. The Soviet Union chased the U.S., biting its teeth until it overcame and crumbled under the weight of this very peaceful coexistence and its own military-industrial complex.

The Soviet marshals proudly boasted: but they had achieved parity!

Why do they need parity when the country has collapsed under piles of rapidly aging missiles, tanks and submarines?

The Kalashnikov assault rifle is Russia's national disgrace.

Turn on the news on any TV channel in France, in the UK, on the island of Tasmania, in Honduras or Kathmandu, and - oh wonder! - every day on any news program you'll see a Kalashnikov rifle. World history is being made with this machine gun in hand, and this machine gun has a Russian name.

The Kalashnikov assault rifle is inscribed in the composition of the national emblems of some African countries, such as Mozambique. There was a project of the coat of arms of Congo with the silhouette of a Kalashnikov assault rifle. The Kalashnikov assault rifle is chosen as a symbol by terrorist organizations.

The Kalashnikov assault rifle is inscribed in the Guinness Book of Records as the most widely used weapon on our planet. There are about 100 million Kalashnikovs in the world right now. I have one hanging on my office wall. One Kalash for every 60 inhabitants of planet Earth. By the way, in Africa they give boys a new name - Kalash.

The Soviet Union gave the rights to manufacture the Kalashnikov assault rifle to 18 countries, mostly as a gratuitous gift. Now, because of its insane generosity, Russia loses two billion dollars every year.

You may object: but there was no Kalash on the news today!

I don't argue, it happens sometimes. But then instead of a Kalash you will see an RPG-7 grenade launcher, a Kalashnikov PK machine gun, a T-54 tank, a Vladimirov machine gun, a ZU-23 anti-aircraft gun or a BTR-60P armored personnel carrier.

All of this was given free of charge to anyone who announced that he was a fighter against capitalism. Weapons were handed over with the right to produce their own weapons and technological documentation, with free training for producers and users.

This was done at the expense of a Soviet Union in which half the maternity hospitals had no hot water and half the schools had no warm toilets; in a country that could not feed itself or provide housing for its officers. This was done by a country whose people were degenerating, drinking and dying out. This was done by a country unable to produce anything but weapons and matryoshka dolls. And oil and gas are not our creation. It doesn't take much intelligence to drill holes in the ground. All the more so now that holes are being drilled for us more and more often by British Petroleum.

Now let us try to imagine Africa or the Muslim world without Soviet weapons in general and without the Kalashnikov assault rifle in particular. The world would be different without them.

So why did the Soviet Union saturate the world with weapons? If not for the World Revolution, then for what? Certainly not for material gain.

Sothe Kremlin rulers lived according to the principle: WE CANNOT MAKE LIFE IN OUR COUNTRY AS Dignified AS , BUT WE WILL TREATEN YOUR LIFE TO LOWER OUR .

And they tried. For three quarters of a century. Not sparing themselves, saying: that the

neighbor's house would burn down! And there are people who repeat with pride: our machine

gun is on the coat of arms of Mozambique!

But the main dog is buried .

And I will show you this damned place right now. While rejoicing at the appearance of the Kalash on the coats of arms of African princes, we somehow completely lost sight of the fact that we ourselves were not supposed to have weapons for personal use. Soviet stores didn't sell assault rifles. And not just assault rifles. You couldn't even buy an ordinary pistol in stores. Chekists, policemen and military men could carry weapons. But only in the line of duty. And if an officer with a girl met a gang of juvenile in the street, he could defend the officer's honor only with his fists. And the gang attacked only if they had a clear numerical superiority. And they were armed with rebar bars.

Let's rustle through the pages of great Russian literature and be surprised to discover that all our favorite heroes have weapons. Let's rustle through the imperishable works of Tolstoy and Kuprin, Lermontov and Chekhov, Pushkin and Dostoevsky, Leskov and Saltykov-Shchedrin. Surprise can not be contained: here in "Dubrovsky", for example, there is an episode about how the French tutor was pushed fun in a room with a huge scary bear. Mishenka sniffed, stood on his hind legs and went at the poor man. He, not being a fool, took a small pistol out of his pocket, put it in the bear's ear, and just like a bang. The bear stood on his hind legs and toppled over. People came running, but no one asked: "Where did you get the trellis in your pocket, Mr.? Were you not searched at the border? Or did you get weapons here, at our place?

But in the Soviet Union, they would have been found out. And they'd have done time.

So, gentlemen, comrades and brothers, this has been the tradition since ancient times: a free man is one who is armed. In many countries it was forbidden for madmen, foreigners and slaves to have weapons. And in tsarist Russia even foreigners with weapons walked around like that musiu with a spaler. Only slaves in all countries and at all times were forbidden to have weapons.

And Soviet citizens were not supposed to have guns. And neither were citizens of free Russia. Citizens

of free Russia, what category do you put yourselves in? To foreigners or madmen? I answer: you are

considered crazy and foreigners in your own country.

And also slaves.

G L A V A 19.

1

So: what are the missiles in Cuba for?

The answer is simple: to solve the problem of Berlin and Germany as a whole.

The plan was to secretly deploy a powerful grouping of Soviet troops in Cuba in September and October 1962, oversaturated with nuclear warheads. And on November 12, 1962, Comrade Khrushchev was to arrive in Cuba on an official visit. On a cruiser, of course. And had to sign a treaty with Cuba on the deployment of Soviet troops on this fertile island. And to announce to the whole world: Look how much we have here! And in the Soviet Union, even more! If you, gentlemen, are concerned about such a neighborhood, let's make a swap: you withdraw American troops from West Germany (and British and French troops at the same time), and we withdraw ours from Cuba.

Otherwise...

But John F. Kennedy knew that otherwise nothing terrible would happen. The Soviet Union has no missiles to fire at America from its own territory, and those in Cuba are extremely vulnerable. Kennedy was warned that Soviet generals and marshals are well aware of the monstrous Soviet lag in missiles and charges, so the war will not start. Therefore, there is no reason to fear the rattle of Khrushchev's heel on the UN podium, and there is no reason to give in to his demands. Let Khrushchev play with his inflatable muscles.

For the sake of not finally driving Khrushchev into a corner, Kennedy could easily agree to the removal of 15 missiles from Turkey, because they were no longer needed, because the decision to abandon these missiles had already been made.

John F. Kennedy knew that the entire Soviet grouping in Cuba was an exchange fund.

And Colonel Penkovsky proved this to American and British intelligence officers with the simplest of examples. Now, knowing the full balance of forces, we ourselves can calculate this and make sure that the grouping in Cuba was created precisely for the purpose of exchange.

2

So, 164 nuclear warheads were delivered to Cuba.

An additional brigade of 8K11 missiles (18 launchers, each carrying one and a half sets of missiles and nuclear charges) was being prepared for deployment to Cuba. The whole fleet was also ready to go there, which, among other things, was planned to have 7 diesel missile submarines and two missile destroyers. In this case, the number of charges in Cuba would have exceeded two hundred.

And we could start negotiations by showing the American controllers: look how many charges! Check: they are real! Do you want to swap? You take one division from Germany, we take one charge from Cuba. All right, two charges per division!

Three! I don't care if it's five!

President Kennedy, however, knew the exact situation. He was preparing a strike on Soviet missile positions in Cuba.

Let us imagine the consequences if the strike had taken place in October 1962.

The simplest option is to strike the Soviet missile positions with A-4 light deck attack aircraft "Skyhawk."

Aircraft lightweight, extremely simple, compact, when based on aircraft carriers did not even need to fold its wings. "Skyhawk" was fantastically reliable. In case of landing gear failure, it could land on two suspended fuel tanks. At the same time, the maximum speed near the ground - 1,000 km / h. Combat radius - 1,000 kilometers.

The cockpit is armored. Two 20mm automatic cannons and 3,720 kilograms of bombs, napalm tanks, guided and unguided missiles.

"Skyhawk" entered service in October 1956; last airplane built in February 1979. It was in service with the U.S. Navy for almost half a century, until 2003. It is still in service in other countries.

And so let's imagine the impact of these small, skittish and vicious predators.

Cuba has a total of 60 strategic charges - one and a half warheads for 40 launchers of 8K63 and 8K65 missiles. These are fearsome weapons. One explosion of a megaton-class charge over a large city means millions of casualties.

However, two regiments of 8K65 missiles had not yet arrived. The U.S. Navy was blocking the approaches to Cuba. The ships carrying these missiles turned for home.

16 charges of one megaton and 8 charges of 2.3 megatons were left without carriers. Half of the thermonuclear power concentrated in Cuba is useless. It cannot be used.

Cuba only had 24 8K63 launchers and 36 one-megaton charges for them. But there is no reason to have one and a half warheads. If 24 launchers make one launch, I don't believe anyone would let them prepare and launch a second missile after that.

So Cuba has a strategic capability of 70 megatons, but in October 1962, only 24 megatons could realistically be struck.

Now let's imagine that the U.S. president didn't wait for the missiles to be lifted into a vertical position and refueled. Let's say he strikes with a couple hundred Skyhawks. And not even from aircraft carriers, but from airfields in Florida, Alabama, Georgia. The position of each Soviet launcher is known to the nearest meter. One ton of fragmentation bombs is enough to disable any open launcher. And here are a dozen toothy dragons for each launcher, and three tons of bombs each, and the fire of automatic cannons. And no nuclear conflict after that.

And if two hundred Skyhawks isn't enough, it'll be four hundred. Or six

hundred. It was not for nothing that Khrushchev trembled when he was told of

such a prospect.

Wait, but Cuba has two divisions of Soviet S-75 anti-aircraft missiles! 144 launchers. Five ammunition packs!

This is certainly true, but the Skyhawk, which operates at low and ultra-low altitudes, especially in areas with heavily rugged terrain, is not afraid of "flying telegraph poles". The C-75 missile has a minimum kill altitude of 500 meters. But this is on flat terrain. And on rugged terrain to fight with suddenly appearing skittish airplanes is even more difficult. But anti-aircraft missile systems from
"The Skyhawks could have gotten it.

But Cuba has 40 Soviet MiG-21s! That's a lot of power. However, the airfield where the 32nd Guards Fighter Regiment sat would not have been ignored. And the Skyhawks would certainly have come with a proper fighter escort for such an occasion.

A strike against Soviet strategic missile installations could have been carried out by F-4 Phantom II aircraft. In 2008, when the 50th anniversary of the first flight of this remarkable machine was celebrated, it was still in service with Germany, Japan, Israel and a number of other states that could not be suspected of poverty or lack of attention to their arsenal. The speed of the "Phantom" is twice the speed of sound. At the time of the Cuban Missile Crisis, it was a marvel of military technology. In 1961, the Phantom set a low-altitude speed record of 1,452 km/h. This record held for 16 years.

When approaching the target at low and ultra-low altitudes, the Phantom is not afraid of "telegraph poles" or MiG-21s. The Phantoms' strike on strategic missile launchers in Cuba could be carried out either from the
The Phantom was the world's first combat aircraft capable of finding and destroying targets beyond visual contact without the aid of a ground-based targeting station. "Phantom" was the world's first combat aircraft capable of finding and destroying targets beyond visual contact without the aid of a ground-based guidance station. And it carried seven tons of bombs and missiles.

These are the easiest options. And without the use of nuclear weapons. But there were other, more complex and more effective moves. There was something to neutralize 24 launchers of 8K63 missiles.

And what would Comrade Khrushchev have after such a raid? He would have six Il-28A bombers, carriers of nuclear bombs. If they had survived the first air operation. The Il-28 is a good machine. But it has a range of up to 1,000 kilometers. Its speed is subsonic. Let's imagine what can do six subsonic bombers in conditions of complete domination of thousands of supersonic fighters?

But Khrushchev has other nuclear assets in Cuba! That's right. Let's go to them.

Cuba had three unguided tactical missile divisions with 12 2K6 missile systems. They were equipped with 24 3P9 rockets with fragmentation charge and 12 3P10 rockets with nuclear charge. The range of 3R10 is 32 kilometers. The U.S. military base Guantanamo Bay is located on the communist island of Cuba. One nuclear charge, understandably, will be fired at the American military base. That's sacred. A couple of nukes will be fired at the landing areas of the marines. If there are any. And the rest of the charges, where do we fire them? They won't go any farther than Cuba anyway. 12 nuclear strikes on the island of Cuba to save the island from the damned imperialists? So who will need Cuba after those strikes?

Another 80 charges, i.e. almost half of the entire nuclear arsenal, were intended for two regiments of FKR-1 front-line cruise missiles.

What is the FKR-1? It is an unmanned aerial vehicle, a scaled-down copy of the MiG-15 fighter. But this thing did not take off from an airfield, but from a bulky towed launching device using a gunpowder gas pedal.

In the Soviet Union, each regiment had eight launchers and two and a half ammunition packs, that is, 20 missiles. Two such regiments were transferred to Cuba, but each was given five warheads. In all, the two regiments had 16 launchers, 80 missiles and the same number of nuclear charges.

And now let's think: if a nuclear war really breaks out what kind of enemy would allow 5 missile launches from each of 16 bulky vulnerable launchers?

A nuclear charge is a colossal material and strategic value. In 1962, the FKR-1 was completely obsolete morally and physically. This diminutive unmanned MiG-15 flew in a straight line at subsonic speed. Any supersonic fighter could have shot it down in flight. So why give 80 super-valuable charges to a tiny number of obsolete carriers? It is impossible to launch five missiles from one launcher in case of war anyway, all the more so for targeting.

And where to shoot them? The maximum range of the FKR-1 is 125 kilometers. It's not gonna reach Florida anyway. To defeat enemy groups at sea? But the FKR-1 cruise missile is not designed for that, it has no appropriate means of enemy detection and guidance. FKR-1 missiles are fired from the ground and on the ground. Will all 80 nuclear charges be used on the ground of Cuba to save its revolutionary proletariat?

Another 6 charges were in the regiment of 4K87 coastal anti-ship cruise missiles. It's the same shrunken MiG-15 unmanned aerial vehicle. It's subsonic, too. And it has the same range. And ship groups do not need to stay within the firing radius of these missiles. Especially since the Americans now know exactly what that range is.

So, I repeat: 164 charges and their carriers are the exchange fund, the material to bargain the withdrawal of American and allied troops from West Germany, or even from the whole of Europe.

It was planned to transfer a brigade of 8K11 operational-tactical missiles to Cuba. But they also had a range of 150 kilometers. But even they could not reach the American coast. Therefore, they could be used to silence sharks in the ocean, but they could not threaten America.

The Soviet fleet was due to arrive in Cuba. But surface ships are useless in waters dominated by enemy aircraft. So are diesel submarines in waters dominated by the enemy's fleet and aircraft.

If the Americans didn't know the characteristics of all Soviet missiles, you could bargain with them.

But the Americans knew that the exchange material was something like a wrapper without the candy. Someone had delivered top secret instructions and descriptions to them. That's why they were not afraid of our ostentatious power.

3

For 50 years, first the propaganda of the Soviet Union and now Russia has been saying: We won in Cuba! We saved the Stallion of Havana!

Let's listen to the propaganda, realizing that these guys are being targeted and paid a lot. They have such a job: to glorify feats and accomplishments. And having listened to their speeches, let us turn to a witness of very high rank, who saw Khrushchev on October 27, 1962.

Name of the witness - Vladimir Yefimovich Semichastnyy. Military rank - Colonel General. Position at the time of the Cuban Missile Crisis - Chairman of the KGB under the USSR Council of Ministers.

His story: there is a meeting of the top leadership of the Soviet Union, Khrushchev entered, plumped heavily in his chair and crushingly threw: "That's it. Lenin's case is lost."

I heard Colonel-General Semichastny's words in person, sitting in front of the television, tossing logs into the fireplace and drinking a Belgian beer called Leffe Brune. (I highly recommend it. Do not consider it a hidden advertisement.) Semichastny spoke on the BBC. Anyone can contact that television company and request a recording. Now the search is instantaneous. Just say the name: Se-mi-private. That's seven parts. I don't know which ones.

What I was struck by, listening to the former head of the most terrible punitive agency in the history of mankind, was the fact that Semichastny did not tell about Khrushchev's jubilation over the withdrawal of 15 obsolete American missiles from Turkey, and the rescue of the Cuban revolution did not make him happy or cheerful.

By the way, the Americans' promise not to attack Cuba was not legally enshrined in any way. One president made a promise, he was killed a year later, and the new one owes us nothing, he made no such promises.

4

At that meeting in the Kremlin, it was not only quickly and clearly established that Lenin's cause, the cause of the World Communist Revolution, was finally and irrevocably lost. There was also another episode that abruptly turned the course of history in an unexpected direction.

Hearing Khrushchev's words, which sounded like a verdict on world communism, everyone was silent. Khrushchev was also silent, staring at the ceiling. And then suddenly he grabbed a heavy crystal inkwell and threw it directly at the head of Comrade Kozlov Frol Romanovich, who had returned from the Kremlin hospital the day before.

Frol Romanovich dodged the flying inkwell. But it didn't save him. The inkwell whistled past his ear and crashed into the wall. And Frol Romanich, rushing to the side, fell down. And he was again taken to the hospital, from which he was released for short periods of time, but never began to work again.

Khrushchev tried to save Kozlov the way the embittered monarch saved his mortally wounded heir in Repin's painting "Ivan the Terrible Kills His Son."

It was not possible to save him. Khrushchev insisted that Kozlov remained in high positions, despite his illness. But Kozlov did not return to work. Kozlov was slowly fading away.

Thus the Kozlov era ended without beginning. Kozlov died on January 30, 1965 at the age of 56. And Brezhnev Leonid Ilyich ascended to the vacated place.

Instead of the path that Comrade Kozlov was going to lead the Soviet Union down, the country moved down the path that Comrade Brezhnev indicated.

But either way, they were two paths to the same abyss.

5

So Lenin's case is lost. What did you mean by that?

It was understood that communism could be spread to West Germany only after the Americans and their allies had withdrawn their troops from there. This could only be organized by blundering. It didn't work out. If so, in the foreseeable historical perspective, Germany West will swallow Germany East. This will be followed by the collapse of the entire system of socialism in Europe. After that, the Soviet Union will not have long to live.

Unable to expand, communism will perish, for it cannot exist alongside normal human society, for normal human society is an example to the people subjugated by communism.

The Cuban Missile Crisis was a last-ditch attempt to trick West Germany into converting to communism. The attempt failed. So neither Britain, France, Italy, Greece, nor France will ever be converted to communism. And that's the end of the Soviet Union. After the Cuban Missile Crisis, the Soviet Union would take a long time to rot and die, it would still stand like a baobab rotting from the inside. But there was no more hope. Khrushchev realized this on October 27, 1962.

6

After the Cuban Missile Crisis, it was on and on. Khrushchev discredited the USSR in the eyes of the whole world: he secretly brought missiles into the Western Hemisphere, and he was kicked out of there in disgrace. Who will respect him after that?

After this defeat, Khrushchev had another problem: what to do with the conspirators? Execute Penkovsky. No question about that. But what to do with those who wore big stars on their golden epaulettes?

Khrushchev could not announce to the whole world that his commanders did not agree with him, that generals and marshals sabotaged his decisions. Therefore, Khrushchev could not judge the generals and marshals. The participants of the conspiracy had to be punished in such a way as not to reveal the fact of disagreement of the army leadership with the actions of the supreme power.
Therefore, the punishment was not by tribunal and firing squad for giving state secrets to the enemy and conspiracy against the supreme power, but milder - with the wording "for loss of vigilance".

Chief Marshal of Artillery Varentsov was stripped of the title of Hero of the Soviet Union and demoted to major-general.

Army General Serov (four stars) was also stripped of the title of Hero of the Soviet Union and demoted to major-general (one star). Perhaps there were other military commanders in the conspiracy, but I have nothing but speculation on this point.

But what to do with the highest in rank and position participant of the conspiracy? His name was Sergei Semyonovich Biryuzov. Rank - Marshal of the Soviet Union. Position - Commander-in-Chief of the Strategic Missile Forces.

Khrushchev hesitated for a long time, doubting, thinking, calculating. And in March 1963, five months after the crisis, he promoted Marshal of the Soviet Union Biryuzov, appointing him Chief of the General Staff.

The decision was correct. The military hated Khrushchev, on whose orders one million two hundred thousand servicemen were thrown out of the army overnight, on whose orders new bomber planes were crushed by tanks as unnecessary. And after that they cut tanks too. Khrushchev could not expel, demote, judge Biryuzov in any way. In this case, he would lose the last support in the army. Therefore, a simple solution: I know what you were plotting against me, but I do not remove you from your posts, but I raise you higher. Look! At the first offense, youll be sent to the zones.

7

Colonel-General Semichastny, head of the KGB, was indignant: how could it be that Marshal Biryuzov was a member of the conspiracy, and the most senior in military rank and position! And he was promoted!

But Semichastny's outrage was private. He could not object openly. The chair of the country's Chief Chekist was rocking and creaking beneath him.

On the one hand, everything is correct - Semichastny reported on the case of Penkovsky to his immediate superior, Comrade Kozlov. But the case concerned the fate of the Soviet Union and the entire world communism. He could have realized that the surveillance of Penkovsky was being prolonged at a time when everything was at stake. Including the fate of mankind!

Khrushchev hesitated. It was dangerous to remove Semichastny. His own man, Khrushchev personally brought him into power. Remove Semichastny, and who to put in his place? And what are the plans of the new one? And with whom is he connected? And who is behind him?

But also for Semichastny, some information to think about. Khrushchev knows that Semichastny is guilty. Therefore, Khrushchev can remove Semichastny at any moment. And Semichastny does not want to leave such a high post, such dizzying heights.

So there was a new conspiracy against Khrushchev, one of the initiators and organizers of which was the head of the KGB, Colonel-General Semichastny.

It is not at all easy for a normal person to understand the logic and psychology of the ardent supporters of the World Communist Revolution.

Here's one of them. His name was Julius Alexandrovich Kvitsinsky. He served as Ambassador-at-Large and headed the Soviet Union's delegation to the negotiations with the United States on limiting nuclear weapons in Europe.

In 1986-1990 - USSR Ambassador to the FRG. Then - First Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of the USSR.

Here is his point of view:

Berlin spoiled the whole situation for us to a great extent and cost enormous sums of money. The GDR was slowly "bleeding out" through Berlin and required continuous feeding from our resources - monetary, material, food.... I knew that if the wall was removed, everything would fall apart. ("Krasnaya Zvezda", June 30 - August 52008).

And then Kwitzinski angrily denounces those who suggested the Berlin Wall should be torn down.

How can you understand this man? The East Germans did not want to live behind barbed wire; take down the wall and the GDR would collapse. Everything was kept only by coercion, only by shooting those who tried to escape from the communist paradise in the back. The peoples of the Soviet Union lived in abject poverty because they had to maintain at least a reasonable standard of living in the occupied countries at their expense.

East Germans don't need it. Neither do the people of the Soviet Union. Only Kvitsinsky and those like him needed this stupid system.

In 1991, when the country had reached the point where there was nothing to eat in Moscow, a group of wise men in the Kremlin found a police solution to economic problems. If the country's stores are empty, then we should crush the dissatisfied with tanks. And everything will get better at once.

Yuli Kvitsinsky, a member of the Central Committee of the Communist Party, immediately joined those who decided to crush their own people with tanks. Kvitsinsky became head of the Soviet Union's Ministry of Foreign Affairs and announced to all ambassadors: support those in the Kremlin, those who, following Hitler's example, threw tanks on Moscow.

Those last defenders of the slave system were kicked out of the Kremlin. But Kvitsinsky's career went uphill. He entered the State Duma and became the first deputy chairman of the State Duma Commission for the Study of the Practice of Ensuring Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms and Control over Their Ensuring in Foreign Countries.

And here Comrade Kvitsinsky, in Russia's main military newspaper, proves that the Berlin Wall should have been preserved, hence killing everyone, including children, who tries to escape from the communist paradise, and putting his own people on tank tracks. And he is also : no matter what human rights are violated in any other country, no matter what freedoms are infringed.

G L A V A 20.

1

I recently watched a debate about torture on an American TV channel.

One politician says: We're Americans! We have no right to do this! We're a democracy. Torture is constitutionally forbidden.

And the other one said to him, "Look at the results! We tortured one terrorist for a while, and he confessed, the bastard confessed - he confessed, we saved so many people by preventing a terrorist attack! Look at the benefits!

If in a country that considers itself the citadel of democracy such debates are held, if torture is carried out (understandably, for the common good) without paying attention to the debates, then believe me that in the Soviet Union there were no doubts about what to do with Colonel Penkovsky. He was tortured. They tortured him long, persistently, with pleasure.

And to have an idea of exactly how, I recommend visiting any country that was once part of the great and inviolable, happy and powerful socialist commonwealth. Any country will show you a secret police museum. I recently visited Budapest. There, the secret police had torture chambers in the semi-basement of a large gray house in the center of the city on a picturesque boulevard.
They were hanging in a cell with a window overlooking the intersection of two streets. Through the white-painted window pane you could hear passers-by laughing outside the window, cars honking, streetcars rumbling. You could feel it all before you died. And in order not to scare the passers-by outside the window with your squealing, they put a ball in your mouth and tied your mouth with a rag.

But you had to live to hang. Some of the cells there are twenty meters high. And there are also cells where the water is knee-deep or even waist-deep. The cells where they beat with rubber sticks are hung with tarpaulins over the walls so that no screams could disturb the peace of law-abiding citizens. Well, the rest is just like everywhere else in our country. They burned their heels on an electric stove, shoved electric soldering irons up their enemies' asses, and used all sorts of equally simple and equally effective methods of inquiry.

If this is the way our younger brothers in class worked, you can be sure that Big Brother's methods of inquiry were no less effective. Colonel Penkovsky had been through it all.

And then they began to prepare him for the trial. The famous masseuse of the Dynamo sports society, Katya, with the affectionate nickname of Kirdyk, worked with Oleg Penkovsky. She was quite unremarkable, small in stature, sturdy, looked young, and loved her work.

Any masseur on your body will instantly find some bumps on which you should press with your fingers, the edge of your palm or your elbow. Press in a way that makes you scream. Some people have the most painful points on their calves, some on their backs, some have weak hip girdles. Professionals will find the most promising spot in two minutes. And they're gonna push.

Katya Kirdyk had her own professional handwriting. She caused convulsions - terrible, wild, deep and long-lasting.

On March 13, 1963, Oleg Vladimirovich Penkovsky was brought before the Military Collegium of the Supreme Court. He was escorted to the dock by Katya Kirdyk, a masseuse. She patted him on the shoulder: don't let him down, or you know what will happen.

All questions and answers were prepared in advance. Rehearsed. But even if Penkovsky deviated from the script, it was no big deal - the people in the audience were all his own, all tested and specially selected for such an occasion.

At any moment when Penkovsky slightly deviated from the text, the judge announced a break, and Penkovsky was taken to a room with powerful soundproofing, where Katya Kirdyk insinuated to him that deviations from the prepared text were inadmissible.

The trial lasted three days. The people in the hall angrily branded the traitor. In those years, 15 years was the maximum sentence. After that, it was a dishonorable discharge.

The prosecutor demanded a death sentence. However, the court, taking into account his frontline merits, passed a sentence of 15 years' imprisonment.

Here it is necessary to dwell especially on the system of selection of those with whom the courtroom was filled.

Power in our country, as we know, belonged to the people. And the Communist Party led and guided this people to new victories and achievements. The Party is our helmsman.

And here, at the lowest level of governance, the people choose their most authoritative representatives. The party proposes candidates from the very depths of the people: Ivanov, Petrov, Sidorov. Everyone unanimously and amicably votes for them. The elected comrades get down to work. Two of them keep silent, approve the decisions of their native Party and boldly implement them. And the third one notices that something is wrong here. And here. It should be corrected and improved. The Party agrees: Well done! You are keenly observing the shortcomings!

Only the next time, this sharp-eyed man will not on the list of candidates. On the list will be silent Ivanov and

Petrov and the new guy Nikolaev. And the people will unanimously vote for them. Then the best of them will get into a higher list and will be on it until something so-and-so will not notice and will not suggest improvements. He will, understandably, be agreed to. But the next time, he'll simply not be on the list of candidates. Never. Ever. And someone will rise higher and higher. All the way to the Supreme Council! And vote, vote, vote. For the further dawn of science and culture! For the unbreakable friendship of peoples. For the increased prosperity of workers. For world peace! For a new turn in the general line of the native Communist Party.

And in every factory, in every workshop, a cadre of people who wanted to get on at least some list had already grown up, ready to shout at rallies and meetings the sake of it what they were instructed to shout at the moment: today for Stalin against Trotsky, tomorrow for Khrushchev against Stalin, then for Brezhnev against Khrushchev. Further - everywhere.

These were the strikers of communist labor, thrice tested, four times sifted through the fine sieves of the Party's personnel policy, and filled the courtrooms.

But even these guys were outraged when the judge announced 15 years to Penkovsky: how could it be so! He betrayed our native power!

Penkovsky was taken out. And then the court clerk appeared and calmed down the workers:

- The store, buffet and order desk are open until midnight. Please don't jostle - there's enough for everyone. And about the verdict, dear comrades, please do not resent. We'll repeat it soon.

2

Penkovsky was taken out of the courtroom. And then they informed him that it was not a trial, but a dress rehearsal. At the rehearsal he did not play his role confidently and convincingly enough.

The preparation for the new trial continued for two long months. He practiced every sentence, every exclamation, every answer to a question.

He was kept in two different cells in alternating shifts. One with plenty of food, fresh air, hot showers and a soft, clean bed. The other. Well, you what I mean. Trial rehearsals lasted 10 hours every day.
-12 hours. Then massage. Soothing, relaxing, sedative. Or unbearable cramps. Katya's hands were very skillful. Depending on the result of the lessons, the night was to be spent in one cell or another.

And only when it was finally established that the client was ready for trial, that he would not fail, he was put back in the dock. And again he was accompanied by the caring Katya: "You'll do your best...".

The trial went better than a dress rehearsal. And they gave him not 15 years, but the highest sentence.
Immediately after the trial, rumors spread that Penkovsky had been pardoned and survived, that he had been changed in appearance and given other documents. These rumors are still circulating today; their source was the repeated rehearsals of the trial, which ended with a relatively lenient sentence.

Along with him in the dock sat British intelligence liaison Greville Wynne. He received 8 years, but the next year he was exchanged for a burned Soviet spy.

I am quite deliberately not touching upon the fate of the American and British participants in this story. They themselves have told us much. And let American and British historians dig up what has not been told. If they are interested, of course. My task is only to put together all known, in plain sight pieces into a single mosaic.

3

The fact that Penkovsky had been turned in by an American was repeatedly told to us, the future extracting and processing officers of the GRU, by the teachers of the First Faculty of the Military Diplomatic Academy of the Soviet Army. It was clear that the teachers had such a job - to intimidate young intelligence officers, to discourage them from running over to the enemy: if you ran over, they would turn you in like Penkovsky.

But our teachers, with a few exceptions, were smart people, so they backed up their words with facts that were hard to disagree with. And the facts were that Penkovsky was interfering with the U.S. military-industrial complex.

4

The GRU and the KGB are hostile

organizations. Like the Gestapo and the

Abwehr.

The GRU extracted enemy secrets, the KGB kept an eye on the GRU. We were always close by. And the Chekists laughed: we had figured out your Penkovsky almost a year before his arrest! We laughed when we listened to his every word during meetings with foreign intelligence officers in Moscow!

The Internet is now filled with recollections of the Chekists who followed Penkovsky: we chortled...

All Chekists served their regime, the regime of idiots and criminals, faithfully and truthfully. To this regime they swore allegiance. Colonel Oleg Vladimirovich Penkovsky was dealing a fatal blow to the power that the Chekists were supposed to protect. But they laughed... And did nothing.

5

Penkovsky was killed. Meanwhile, the process of disintegration of the Soviet Union was gaining momentum. In 1963, Krivoy Rog rebelled. The police station was burned down, a policeman who had shot at the people was hanged on a telegraph pole. The revolt had to be put down with deadly fire. The instigators - or rather those who were made out to be such at the trial - were shot.

But Sumgayit has risen.

Tension was rising, everything was about to explode and collapse. And then Khrushchev went to extreme measures. The Soviet Union began buying bread from the damned capitalists, mostly in America. In 1963, Khrushchev paid 520.3 tons of gold for imported grain and other food.

Khrushchev was a traitor, an enemy of the people, a traitor to the Motherland. If he had paid a small share of that gold to his own people, there would have been an abundance of bread, meat, butter and everything else in the country. But Khrushchev clearly stood his ground: let the men in the collective farms get no money, let them degenerate and drink, and I will give the gold to the Americans. Let America prosper. Let the American farmer have a good time.

And so it went. Every year, Khrushchev, and those who succeeded him, paid tribute to America in hundreds of tons of gold so that their own people would die in poverty. Beggars are easy to control.

The system is simple: the gold that the Kremlin leaders paid to the Americans could never come back to us. It's an irretrievable loss. And wheat is a replenishable product. New wheat would grow in America the next year. And it was sold for gold again.

The Soviet Union built more and more missiles and submarines, tanks and combat airplanes. In order to repel a possible attack: we would give the last of our money, but we would make more missiles. As long as there was no war. But America had no reason to attack the fools who willingly gave up their treasure. Why attack them if they were already paying tribute faithfully?

6

And the Soviet Union was preparing to crush bloody capitalism. The Soviet Union was building and missiles, tanks and strategic bombers. More and more and more. The Soviet Union was arming the whole world with Kalashnikovs. The Soviet Union supported any fighters against capitalism, any extremists and terrorists. And we sang a song: We have no other way, we have a rifle in our hands.

There was really no other way. The damned capitalist environment had to be destroyed. Otherwise, the Soviet Union was bound to collapse, for the advantages of a free economy over a bureaucratic one were too obvious.

But our leaders, while investing monstrous amounts of money in producing weapons and supporting the fighters against capitalism around the world, did not think about a simple enough question. If we eventually crush capitalism, then who will feed us?

7

October 1962 - the apogee of the Soviet Union. The highest point of flight.

From there, the slide downward began. The leaders realized that something or someone had to be changed. First of all, Khrushchev. A conspiracy was brewing.

In October 1964, Khrushchev was vacationing on the shores of the Black Sea. At that time, a plenum of the Central Committee was assembled without his knowledge. And Khrushchev was politely asked to return to Moscow.

Khrushchev went ballistic. How? What plenum? Why weren't they

reported? Nobody explained anything to Khrushchev: come back,

we are waiting.

And Khrushchev's guards are the KGB. Khrushchev's guards are under Colonel-General Semichastny. All

government communication is also KGB. It is also subordinate to Colonel-General Semichastny.

And all government transportation - ships, trains, planes - all KGB.

Khrushchev - in the hands of comrades with hot heads and cold hearts. He flew to Moscow. And then, on October 13, 1964, the people whom Khrushchev himself raised from the dirt straight to the princes, told him everything they thought of him. Khrushchev was removed from all posts that day. The next day, October 14, the party's decision was formalized.

Five days later, on October 19, 1964, Chief of the General Staff of the Armed Forces of the USSR Marshal of the Soviet Union Biryuzov Sergei Semenovich died in an airplane crash.

While Khrushchev was in power, nobody touched him, but the Penkovsky case was not forgotten or forgiven. I

often hear: but the idea is right! This realization of a great idea is criminal and stupid.

Let's not argue. But let's recognize a trend. Hundreds of millions of people have died all over the world for the realization of a great idea. But everywhere, in the Soviet Union and Albania, in China and Cuba, in North Korea and Hungary, in Romania and Cambodia, in Vietnam and Ethiopia, numerous attempts to realize the great idea have always had the same result: A locked border, total bureaucracy, concentration camps, endless lines, shortages of everything, starvation, mass extermination of people, all-powerful secret police, widespread snitching, and a great leader at the head of the country who left office only by coup or death.

For a whole century of attempts (and torture), no one has succeeded in anything good: only a shining dazzling tomorrow with a gray and dirty today.

So let's figure it out: could an idea be great if all its proponents were criminals and fools?

G L A V A 21.

1

But Semichastny didn't fare as well. Any conspiracy is prepared by a group. The conspirators, having reached power, immediately begin to divide it. The group immediately begins a brutal struggle, in which one survives. He kills the others or drives them out of power.

One of the most active initiators and participants in the conspiracy against Khrushchev, KGB chief Colonel-General Semichastny soon after Khrushchev's successful overthrow, stepped down from his post and was pushed out of power.

2

After the Cuban Missile Crisis and the overthrow of Khrushchev, the Soviet Union sluggishly entered a historical era that even official propaganda refers to as stagnation. The stagnation lasted for a long time. But by a strange whim of fate, the Soviet Union did not collapse all at once thanks to Khrushchev.

Stalin believed: to trade in resources is to trade in the Motherland. And he did not. Supplies of natural resources to the countries occupied by the Red Army were not for profit, but for far-reaching political purposes.

It was the same with the supply of resources to Hitler. It was done not for profit, but for Hitler to crush the democratic countries of Europe with our help.

And Khrushchev laid a pipe from east to west. The entire economy of the Soviet Union sat on that pipe. That's why the Soviet Union did not collapse quickly, that's why the rot continued for another three decades.

But the country was slowly sinking into the mire. There were two ways out: to do nothing or to break out of the

mire. If you do nothing, it will slowly suck you in.

If you rush in, you'll get sucked in fast.

Brezhnev did nothing and ruled happily for 18 years. After him, two more elders followed the same path.

And Gorbachev rushed....

3

If Colonel Penkovsky had not accomplished his historic mission, our lives would have been very different. If at all.

It is clear that the Americans have never admitted that the failure of the Man Who Saved the World is on their conscience. Only some researchers name Jack Dunlap, an employee of the US National Security Center, who ratted out Penkovsky. But someone was behind him, too.

Please do not make any claims against me, do not take me to court, I did not mention this name. I only reminded you that some Western researchers mention this name.

But I believe that someday Penkovsky's story will be described from the side not visible to us.

The Soviet Chekists had to conceal the fact that they had received information about Penkovsky from the other side of the ocean. For this purpose, a story was concocted about how an English woman with a child was being followed in Moscow when a man approached her and handed her a box of candy. They said they followed him, established his identity, and started following him.

They say we figured it out on our own without any help.

4

The Kremlin propaganda did everything possible and even more to present Colonel Penkovsky as a scoundrel and a scoundrel. Already during the trial, he was being slathered with dirt - he was living his life in drinking establishments, they gave examples: he drank champagne from a woman's slipper in a restaurant.....

The prosecutor and judges blatantly lied. Their task was to show that Penkovsky could not and did not know anything interesting. He collected some gossip and passed it on to American and British spies. The fact that Penkovsky was a GRU officer was kept silent. Few people in the country knew about the existence of the GRU at that time. The case of Penkovsky in court was not connected in any way with the Cuban Missile Crisis or with the activities of the top leaders of the Soviet Armed Forces. Everything was presented in a simpler way: Western radio stations were slandering our happy life, and Penkovsky was supplying them with gossip.

But no one has answered the simple question: why didn't he run away, even though he was often in Paris and London? He would have gotten millions for his information. And in Moscow, he could not lead a debauched lifestyle and spend the money of foreign intelligence agencies. This is not the kind of service for a GRU officer to waste time, they don't allocate time for binge-watching, and they look after everyone. You can't get away with it.

Soviet propaganda was joined by American propaganda. Those whom he had saved, those who had turned him in, declared Penkovsky a madman and a fanatic. He allegedly suggested the Americans launch a nuclear strike on Moscow. We'll believe that, too. Oleg Penkovsky has a beloved wife and a beloved daughter in Moscow. So launch a nuclear strike against them!

Penkovsky himself invariably returned to the Soviet Union. Probably, he asked: you guys, wait, let me fly to Moscow, and then hit it with a thermonuclear charge....

The interest of American propaganda is clear: if a man was turned in, he couldn't have been good.

5

In recent years, due to the flourishing of the Internet, the fictions of Moscow propaganda have become quite horrible. The web is overflowing with them.

They say that while in Turkey, Penkovsky allegedly traded in gold jewelry in the bazaar, pestered foreigners to recruit him, then came to the Turkish counterintelligence, told who is a resident of the GRU in Turkey, the resident was kicked out, and Penkovsky took his place. What a scoundrel!

Sounds awful. And of course we'll believe it, too. But once we do, we're at a dead end.

In 1955-1956, when Oleg Vladimirovich Penkovsky was working in Turkey, the Criminal Code of 1926 was in force. It contained Article 107, "Speculation", i.e. "buying up and reselling by private individuals of agricultural products and mass consumption items".

I bought a sack of potatoes from a man in the village, sold it and... you get jail time.

All over the world, buying and selling is the basis of economic life. In the Soviet Union, if you bought a blouse in a store at one price and sold it at another, it was a criminal offense.

What if he sold at the same price? In this case, a clarification was given to the courts: if he sold at the same price or even at a lower price, he should still go to jail! It is not the result of the trade operation that matters, it is the intent. And the intent was to make money! That's why the guilty - to the camps! And if you bought it, but didn't sell it in time? In this case, if the court found that the sale was intended, - soldered term. With a different wording: for preparation for speculation.

On August 22, 1932, Article 107 was strengthened by a decree of the CEC and SNK of the USSR. From that moment on, the purchase and resale of agricultural products and mass consumption items (i.e. needles and scissors, soap and matches, a bunch flowers and a bunch of radishes) was punishable by imprisonment in a concentration camp for 5 to 10 years with confiscation of property and without the right to amnesty.

The concentration camp is not my overreaching. Read the decree of August 22, 1932, that's exactly what it says there. Let's pay attention to the date. In August 1932 Adolf Hitler lost all hope of coming to power, and we already had concentration camps in full bloom. And not for an attempt to overthrow government, but for undermining the socialist economy, expressed in the sale of carrots and cucumbers. Those who tried to overthrow the government were shot.

Only the state had the right to trade in the Soviet Union, at prices set by the government. A man could only sell what he grew himself. But all the men were driven into collective farms.

What's my point? I'm referring to the legend that Colonel Penkovsky traded in gold jewelry in the Turkish bazaar. A question for the comrade Chekists: did you citizens know about it then? And did nothing about it?

The Main Intelligence Directorate, where Penkovsky served, was engaged, as its name suggests, in intelligence.

And the State Security Committee, as its name implies, dealt with state security issues. The guys listened: who would tell a joke about Comrade Khrushchev at the embassy; they sniffed: who had too much to drink at a diplomatic reception; they looked closely: who had hooked up with another man's wife. This was the main essence of their work. For this the guys received orders and stars on their epaulettes. And now they suddenly became aware that a Soviet colonel in the bazaar sells gold jewelry. And they did nothing!

If this is true, then we should not laugh at Colonel Penkovsky, but at the lazy and stupid Chekists. If this is true, then the entire KGB should have been disbanded and the leadership tried. The colonel is committing a criminal offense, and the KGB sleuths are not fulfilling their direct duties.

Illegal circulation of precious metals, especially the sale of gold to foreigners, was not considered ordinary speculation in the Soviet Union. Under Khrushchev, speculation in currency and gold was punishable by firing squad. And now the vigilant Chekists have an opportunity to distinguish themselves, but they are afraid to use the power.

So maybe Penkowski had high patrons?

Don't worry: the patrons would have been jailed too. There was a fierce struggle for power at the top. If it was reported that a marshal or a general was patronizing gold smuggling, the patron and the perpetrator would be sent to the very places where they do physical labor in the fresh air. If not farther.

Or maybe the Chekists didn't know all this at the time. They found out later. Let's say. But let me ask you: when did they find out and how? Half a century later, they went to a Turkish bazaar, questioned witnesses who remembered the colonel who was selling, and now they have posted it on the Internet?

6

The story of how Penkovsky pestered foreigners in Turkey to get recruited into some foreign intelligence agency is quite funny.

Such attempts are pure treason against the motherland. That's Article 58-1. It's a firing squad. Let me repeat the question: Comrade Chekists, did you know about it at that time, too? And did not do anything? Or did you make it up later in hindsight?

And the story of how Penkovsky gave up his boss to Turkish counterintelligence is absolutely ridiculous.

Imagine yourself in the shoes of the chief of Turkish counterintelligence. His task is to fight espionage. Soviet espionage in first place. The surest, most desirable way to fight it is to catch a Soviet spy doing something obscene and to convert him. Then the information will come directly from the first hand: who and what is doing in the residency.

A Soviet diplomat, for example, gets drunk, makes a mess of things, and a quiet agent's approach to him: don't worry, dear, we won't report it to anyone, we'll forget everything..... If another diplomat slept with another man's wife, he could be approached with a recruitment proposal.....

And suddenly a Soviet colonel from the military attaché's office, that is, an intelligence officer with a star his forehead, who sells gold in the bazaar, commits a crime for which in the Soviet Union they put him to the wall. So did the Turkish counterintelligence did not notice him, did not offer him money, if the colonel needs it so much? If he demonstrates his need for money to the whole world?

Then this colonel himself allegedly came to Turkish counterintelligence and told them who the GRU resident was, where the resident might have left a legacy, and for what exploits he could be expelled. And the Turkish counterintelligence allegedly expelled the resident, and Penkovsky took his place.

Wait a minute... And Turkish counterintelligence didn't take Penkovsky by the white ass after that? And didn't demand he keep working?

If in your country an enemy colonel comes to you and gives away state secrets, will you thank him and let him go in peace? He's the one who took the hook! He brought you the dirt on himself on a silver platter. He's got nowhere to go now. He's caught!

Is Turkish counterintelligence so stupid? The GRU colonel became a traitor, he himself brought material on his commander. But by doing so, he brought to the counterintelligence service firing material on himself. For such things in the Soviet Union, and in any other country, one is killed after brutal torture. Did Turkish counterintelligence not take advantage of this opportunity? Did not the fact of voluntary betrayal nail the colonel to the wall?

No, citizens, it is not Turkish counterintelligence that is so stupid. All these stories are a testament to the stupidity of those who make up such stories.

If all this is true, then let us laugh at our valiant Chekists, fearless men with intelligent, slightly tired eyes.... They knew that the Soviet colonel was passing on top secret information to Turkish counterintelligence about the work of the GRU resident in Turkey, but the cowardly Chekists, betraying their oath and their homeland, did not fulfill their official duties.

Note also that Soviet military intelligence, even after the GRU chief, Army General Serov, was removed and demoted to major general, not only did not forget about Penkovsky's family, but also helped his wife and daughter. Assistance, often unspoken, was also provided by higher patrons: for example, Penkovsky's property was left to his family despite his conviction and the punishment established by the current legislation; Penkovsky's daughter was able to enroll in Moscow State University, the country's leading university, whose doors were closed to relatives of state criminals in those days.

The GRU knew Penkovsky, was proud of him, loved him.

7

At the time of the great successes of the Soviet Union in space, the people lived and the official propaganda intensely fueled the legend of some special rocket miracle fuel, which allows the Soviet Union to

to take the lead in conquering the universe.

The most official writer of the Soviet Union was Alexander Borisovich Chakovsky, winner of the Stalin, Lenin and State prizes, Hero of Socialist Labor, holder of seven orders, including four orders of Lenin, member of the Central Committee of the Communist Party, deputy of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR, Secretary of the Board of the Writers' Union, and so on and so forth. In the year of Oleg Penkovsky's execution, the writer Chakovsky published the story "The Light of a Distant Star". At the heart of the plot - the story of how a woman scientist in a particularly closed scientific center creates some absolutely extraordinary rocket fuel....

A movie with the same title was immediately made. Ivan Pyryev himself, Stalin's favorite, the creator of masterpieces about the happy and pleasant life on the collective farm, about lovely piggies with luxurious hairstyles, powdered and painted angelic faces and well-groomed varnished nails, about Kuban Cossacks singing and dancing, and between solo and group dances collecting abundant harvests.

The release of the story and then the film "The Light of a Distant Star" coincided with strange phenomena in the development of the Soviet space program. Suddenly, the Soviet Union began to lag behind the United States, and then it began to appear more and more clearly.

And the people were informed: the bastard Penkovsky sold the secret of our rocket fuel!

However...

However, all Soviet space achievements were realized with the help of the "Magnificent Seven" - Korolev's R-7 rocket (aka 8K71) and its modifications.

And the Seven flew on kerosene. Korolev was surpassed by the great German Werner von Braun, who created for America the most powerful rocket in the history of mankind, the Saturn-5.

But this rocket also flew on kerosene.

Therefore, if we believe the stories that Penkovsky sold the secrets of our rocket fuel to America, we would have to admit that he sold the secret of kerosene production.

In fact, America has dramatically surpassed the Soviet Union in the development of solid propellant for combat

missiles. On April 20, 1959, the first successful launch of the Polaris A-1 solid fuel rocket took place.

April 14, 1960 - the first successful launch of this missile from a nuclear missile submarine
"George Washington," which was in a surface position.

On July 20, 1960, the Polaris A-1 missile was successfully launched from underwater. On

November 15, 1960, the Polaris A-1 missile was put into service.

Twenty years later, in October 1980, the first Soviet solid-fuel ballistic missile for submarines, the R-31 (ZM17), was put into experimental operation in the Soviet Union. Only one nuclear-powered submarine, the K-140, was armed with this type of missile as an experiment. The missile did not go into production. Just before the collapse of the Soviet Union, testing of the R-31 missile was terminated.

Another 30 years have passed, and the Navy of modern Russia still has big problems with solid-fuel ballistic missiles for submarines.

By the way, "Polaris" means "Polaris". This is how the light of a distant star reaches us.

There are several questions in the Penkowski case that are either vaguely answered or not answered at all.

I offer my answers. If someone has more convincing explanations, I am ready to listen, discuss and agree. So, let's go over what we've learned....

Q: Why place missiles in Cuba when America can be threatened with those missiles on the territory of the Soviet Union?

Answer: In 1962, there was little threaten America from the Soviet Union. Since the advent of nuclear weapons, the Soviet Union has lagged far behind the United States in the number of nuclear warheads and their delivery vehicles. In the late 1950s and early 1960s, the Soviet missile industry operated with a bias toward showmanship. Powerful missiles were immediately used for demonstrations in space, leaving too few for the Armed Forces. In October 1962, the Soviet Union had only five launch sites for 8K74 rockets capable of reaching America. They were on the surface, extremely complex and vulnerable. The Armed Forces had up to two dozen 8K64 missiles on high-boiling components. But this missile was not yet in service. The only way to have a psychological impact on America was to deploy missiles with ranges of 2,100 and 4,500 kilometers in Cuba.

Q: What is the real strategic value of the nuclear charges stationed in Cuba?

Answer: Quite small. Theoretically, 40 strategic missiles with megaton-class charges could pose a threat to America. However, they were extremely and even prohibitively vulnerable before launch. It was impossible to launch a surprise strike with these missiles because of the length of preparation visible from the outside. Twenty more of the same missiles with charges were useless. No one would have allowed two dozen more strategic missiles to be brought out of hiding after the first missile salvo and prepared for launch at the same launch sites. After the first nuclear strike from Cuba against the U.S., or even earlier, a nuclear strike from U.S. territory against Cuba would have followed. And there would be nothing left of Cuba.

Of the 104 Soviet tactical nuclear charges that had already been delivered to Cuba, only six bombs for six Il-28A bombers could theoretically be dangerous to the United States. But the likelihood that they could have reached their target under conditions of complete domination by U.S. supersonic fighters is extremely low.

The remaining 98 tactical charges could not be used against America due to insufficient carrier range.

Q: What was the practical purpose of placing a powerful grouping of Soviet troops in Cuba with an excessive number of nuclear charges for which there were no suitable carriers?

Answer: the Soviet troop grouping was an "exchange fund" for the coming negotiations for the withdrawal of American, British and French troops from West Germany.

Q: How could Colonel Penkovsky hand over top secret documents to which he did not and could not have access?

Answer: He received documents from generals and marshals from the top leadership of the Soviet Armed Forces who were aware of the danger of a possible nuclear missile crisis and who had access to all secrets.

Question: Why didn't he run away? Soviet propaganda claimed that he was motivated by a lust for money and a heightened passion for the female sex.

Answer: Penkovsky was not a traitor. He acted not on his own initiative and not for money, but on the orders of the chief of the GRU, Army General Serov.

Q: How was Soviet counterintelligence able to detect Penkovsky's treason?

Answer: She couldn't in any way. Only help from across the ocean could solve it. And quickly and completely.

Q: Why did KGB leaders not decide to arrest Penkovsky immediately after it became clear that he was working for Britain and the United States? This became clear on December 18, 1961, but Penkovsky continued to transmit top secret materials in huge quantities until the very moment of his arrest on October 22, 1962? Why did the KGB leadership not suppress these actions?

Answer: Frol Romanovich Kozlov, the number two man in the Soviet leadership, tried to use the Penkovsky case against the leadership of the Soviet Army and against Khrushchev, who was the number one man.

Question: Why wasn't Penkovsky caught red-handed, why was he arrested just on the street and not at the moment of handing over the secret materials?

Answer: The top leaders of the Soviet Union represented by Khrushchev, Brezhnev, Kosygin and Mikoyan learned about the Penkovsky case only at the moment of sharp aggravation of the crisis.

EPILOGUE.

Eight years after Colonel Penkovsky's execution, I entered the First Faculty of the top secret Military Diplomatic Academy of the Soviet Army. The very faculty from which Colonel Oleg Vladimirovich Penkovsky had once graduated. The memory of him lived on both in the Academy and in the Main Intelligence Directorate of the General Staff, for which the Academy forged the cadres.

It was no secret to anyone in the leadership of the GRU and the Military Diplomatic Academy that Penkovsky was following the orders of his commanders, although in official speeches, practical classes and lectures they all had to brand and curse the despicable traitor. But in private conversations, a hint was always flickering through: it's not that simple, guys....

In 1963, immediately after the trial, excerpts of newsreels from the courtroom were shown to the masses. And many years later we had the opportunity to watch these materials in a much fuller volume.

I was struck by Penkovsky's smile at the last moment when he was being led out of the courtroom after the announcement of the death sentence. It was the smile of a happy man.

How can be? A suicide bomber is being led to a gruesome execution, and he's happy!

On the other hand, to save at least one planet from destruction, even if not the biggest, but the most beautiful - isn't that enough for complete happiness?

AFTERLIFE.

Only today it is possible to summarize the final results and assess the events of that great decade and their impact on the fate of the country and the world. Our current life is woven from the consequences of those decisions that were made by the country, its leaders, the people, each of us who lived in those years.

Nowhere in the world has there been such a huge gap between the real state of affairs and the promises of the authorities: in the bright future everything for you, citizens, will be according to your needs, but now - cards for products of disgusting quality.

But Moscow was not to be offended. There are foreigners in Moscow. They had to be shown that Moscow sometimes sells sausage. And bread in Moscow almost without a line. Sometimes they sell eggs, milk and even meat!

The system was simple and clear. The whole country fed and clothed Moscow. Meat and butter, cheese and sausages, clothes and shoes, eggs and milk, cottage cheese and sour cream were brought from all over the country to Moscow. And then the population of the whole country would come to Moscow, buy it all up and take it back to the whole country.

People would come to the capital from far away, queue up at night, stand all day, buy a piece of cheese, which for some reason was called Dutch cheese, sausage made from an unknown product, washing powder, and return home at night. Every evening hundreds of trains left Moscow for all parts of the country, filled to the top with happy people who had managed to snatch a piece. People called those trains sausage trains.

The Kremlin leadership had to fight it. Otherwise, the newcomers were throwing away all the merchandise, emptying the store shelves. Muscovites took offense. The last leader of the Soviet Union, Mikhail Gorbachev, was terribly talented. He found a way out. He introduced a "Buyer's Business Card" in Moscow. You live in Moscow, you get such a card, you go to the store and buy whatever you want. If you don't live in Moscow, you don't get a shopper's card! You can wait in line for a month, but they won't sell you anything.

Gorbachev had a small flaw: he never thought about the consequences of his brilliant decisions.

Yes, in Moscow they have introduced "Buyer's Business Cards", and they don't sell anything to newcomers without the card. But then the newcomers have nowhere to put their money. There's nothing in their own city, and in Moscow they can't sell to strangers. What to do with the money that can't be used to buy anything? The leaders of Soviet trade quickly realized how to exploit the situation. Why sell a bar of soap to the holder of a "Buyer's Business Card" at the state price, when there is a surplus of money in the country and the black market will take this product at a much higher price?

And all the goods went to the left. The stores of Moscow were empty.

Comrade Gorbachev's brilliant decision had another consequence. Strangers stopped coming to Moscow, because they couldn't sell here anyway. And then there was nothing to eat away from Moscow. And people in the provinces began to stir. And if anything, they would smash the leadership exactly where there were no "buyer's cards", where there were empty stores: in Vladimir and Yaroslavl, in Ryazan and Tula, in Kuibyshev and Kalinin.

The local princes were worried: in case of a hunger riot, they would beat us, not the Moscow leaders! And they were indignant: our people can't even buy stinking sausage in Moscow! All right. But where does it come from in Moscow? It's not on Red Square where cows and pigs are raised. And not on Gorky Street. Where? We have it here! We, neighboring regions, feed Moscow by sending products there. No, my dears, you in Moscow as you wish, but I won't send meat from my region to Moscow. Or if there's an uprising, who'll be hanged by their feet?

And the neighboring regions stopped supplying Moscow with food. Then the inhabitants of Moscow took offense: What on earth is going on?

So, the state prints money that can't be used to buy anything. What should the leaders do? In January 1991, General Secretary of the CPSU Central Committee and President of the USSR Mikhail Gorbachev signed a decree to withdraw from circulation within three days 50- and 100-ruble bills of 1961. An engineer's salary at that time was 150 rubles a month. People work, create spaceships and submarines, tanks and machine guns, they are paid money for their work. But there is nothing in the stores. And Gorbachev declared the money printed by his government invalid. You had money in the bank, you decided to take it, and we won't give it to you! It's written off. There's too much money in the country.

I love Makovsky's great painting "The Collapse of the Bank". In the hall of a bankrupt financial institution, a lady proves something to a policeman, an indignant general tries to pour out his indignation to his young wife, a merchant, sorrowfully drooping his head, resigned to the idea that all is over, all is lost. And in the corner a nimble dandy from the bank's board of directors, glancing around thievingly, is quickly hiding some papers in an inner pocket.

This picture was painted a hundred years before the collapse of the Soviet Union. But it accurately reflects everything that happened during the reign of the nimble dandy: people invested money in a bank (in a state bank!), the bank went bankrupt, and the money disappeared into the deep pockets of the management.

Gorbachev robbed his people of billions. And he robbed them twice. The

first time: he offered to put money in the bank and did not return it.

The second time: he left those who did not trust the state without money; he did not keep the money in the state bank, but kept it under his mattress.

The exchange of currency is sudden. It takes three days to exchange. But you can only exchange a small amount. The rest you can put up on the walls of the latrine. They're no longer accepted.

And if you are a geologist in the desert, how do you exchange old-style money for new? And if you are on a train from Vladivostok for seven days? And if you are a captain of a nuclear submarine, scaring the enemy with nuclear power in the ocean? What if you are an officer, conducting exercises at the Totsk firing range? And if you're a cosmonaut on a space flight? And if you're a rocket man in a mine on combat duty? And if you are an actor on a movie set?

Gorbachev's answer is the same: Farewell to your money. I managed to exchange mine.

Imagine that you have done a job, the customer pays you, and then announces that the money he gave you is fake. This is exactly what Gorbachev did to the people of the Soviet Union: the money that his government printed and paid the people with was declared worthless, worthless pieces of paper.
Gorbachev and his government money from the people.

I will repeat a hundred thousand times: the Soviet Union was ruled by fools and criminals. I will explain my thought on the example of Gorbachev, who is beloved by the West. It is obvious: Gorbachev is a criminal, because by signing the decree on monetary reform, he robbed his people. To this I would add: he is also a fool. Let's consider: who will remain loyal to him after such financial feints? Who will support him? How long will he sit in the Kremlin after that?

I once heard praise for Gorbachev: it was said that he had supposedly ended the Cold War.

He did not stop it, but lost it, ruining the country with his "wisest" leadership, robbing its people and throwing them to the mercy of other, even more ferocious and predatory robbers.

But I want to believe that if the world again finds itself at a dangerous line, there will again be heroes among us who will save it from destruction.

Bristol June 11, 2011

Victor Suvorov about his books and himself.

I was born in the Far East in 1947. My childhood was spent in distant and very distant garrisons - Barabash, Yanchikha, Slavyanka, Barabash again, Ryazanovka.... And there was everything a man needed for complete happiness: self-propelled guns SU-76 and SU-100, anti-aircraft guns 52-K, armored personnel carriers BTR-40,
BTR-152s and even BTR-50Ps, M-30 and D-1 howitzers, artillery tractors, PT-76 tanks, and many, many other miscellaneous things, including abandoned fortified areas all along the Pacific coast.

There was a division in Barabash, in Slavyanka, too, because the schools there were big, but in Ryazanivka we had one teacher for all four grades. She was also the school principal and the janitor. The first and second classes sat in one room; then, in the second shift, the third and fourth classes sat in the same room. There were five or six kids in each class. The teacher taught half of the lesson with the first class, the second half of the lesson with second class, and in the afternoon, the first half of the lesson with the third class and the second half with the fourth.

In September 1957, after 12 years of service in the Far East, my father was transferred to the Kiev Military District. In Konotop we lived on Garmatnaya Street, i.e. on Cannon Street or Artillery Street, if you translate it into Russian. I studied at school No. 8. The first four grades - five different schools. When we left Ryazanovka, the teacher took a sheet out of my notebook and wrote a note: "Volodya Rezun got excellent marks in September in such and such subjects...". She didn't have a stamp, of course. Purely concrete: a phony diploma. And then my father at the headquarters certified this document with the seal of the 72nd Guards Port-Arthur Mortar Regiment of the Order of Alexander Nevsky.

In August 1958, I entered the Voronezh Suvorov Military School. The Suvorov schools were established by order of Comrade Stalin in 1943. Under him there were 15 of these schools. In addition, there were two NKVD Suvorov schools. Those had not scarlet epaulettes, buttonholes and stripes, but blue. They were called "Arakcheevs." After Stalin, two more IEDs were created in the system of the Ministry of Defense: Leningrad and Minsk. The organization of all Suvorov military schools was established personally by Comrade Stalin: the head of the school - Major General, he has three colonels in deputies: first deputy, head of the training department and head of the political department. Each school has seven companies. Company commanders are lieutenant colonels, platoon commanders are majors. There were no warrant officers at that time, there were super enlisted men. In each company - company foreman, in each platoon - deputy platoon commander. In other words, each company had four enlisted men, or warrant officers, if we translate it into modern terms.

In a platoon - 25 Suvorovs, in a company - 75, in the school - 525. However, they kicked them out mercilessly. After the first year of training usually made a small additional enrollment. After that, the unfit were kicked out, but there was no new enrollment, so there was a shortage in the schools, which in each company increased as we approached graduation.

During my training, the head of the Vzh SVU was Colonel Ivanov, then Major General Dudorov. The company commander was Lieutenant Colonel Merkulov, then Lieutenant Colonel Istomin. Platoon commanders were successively Major Fedorov, Captain Dementiev, Major Stepansky, Major Panferov. The company's petty officer for all years was petty officer of the superannuated service Chernykh, and the deputy platoon commander was petty officer of the superannuated service Uskov.

The military town where the school was located was built under Alexander the Third especially for the penalty battalion. The buildings are two-storied, brick, built to last for centuries. In the center is a powerful structure with several dozen solitary cells on the first floor and prison windows with bars and iron shutters under the ceiling.

In modern times, these chambers housed the college's warehouses, from armory to clothing and food stores,
- There were a lot of cameras. And on the second floor there were huge halls. In my time, it housed a grandiose library and a reading room. The library was not just grandiose, but luxurious.

During the war, the Germans were on the right side of the river - where the city lies - but they were not allowed on the left side. It was a suburb, and its name was Pridacha. These barracks were located on Pridacha. Before the fighting began - and the fighting in Voronezh was as brutal as in Stalingrad - the city library was taken to the indestructible barracks.

Before 1917 Voronezh was a merchant and industrial city, and even earlier Peter the Great built a fleet here for access to the Sea of Azov and the Black Sea. The city library was full of books of the XIX century. The city was literally wiped off the face of the earth during the war, but the barracks on Prydacha survived, with only some of the buildings bearing traces of shrapnel.

After the war, the city didn't care about the library - there was no place to put it anyway, so it remained in our school. After the war, the city didn't care about the library - it had nowhere to put it anyway.
The only exception were those individual not quite normal booklovers who on Sundays came voluntarily to sort, sort, arrange, and catalog bookstacks. The work progressed slowly, but no one rushed it. After the war, almost two decades passed, and the work was still not completed.

I don't know what happened to that treasure later. But I suspect that the city authorities simply forgot where they had sent the library during the war. No one ever reminded them.

Around the building with solitary confinement cells and the library stood an impenetrable rectangle of all other buildings: headquarters, barracks, training buildings, canteen, two gymnasiums, sanitary unit, bathhouse and everything else. In all

The rest of the buildings had normal windows, tall and wide, but in every window opening there were pieces of heavy steel bars from the bars that had been sawed out, turning the town of the penal battalion into a place of training for the younger military generation. The auditorium was built in the spacious and high battalion church, whose bell tower had been torn down and a stage erected in place of the altar.

The order was strict and clear: rise at 7:00, exercise, toilet, morning inspection, breakfast, six hours of classes, lunch, two hours of free time, two hours of compulsory self-training, dinner, an hour of optional self-training (you can learn lessons, or you can read a book), evening walk i.e. in formation with songs), evening turnover and departure.

When I was 13, I wrote my first novel - about a mechanical cat used for intelligence and terrorist purposes. It's a long time ago, but sometimes the devils scratch at my side with pitchforks: shouldn't the text be restored? After all, it turned out funny.

We were taught well and according to a special program. In ordinary schools there were ten classes, in the IED - eleven. At the end of each school year we took exams. After the exams, there were camps where the training continued. When we grew up, every summer we had an internship in the army: soldier's uniform, only the boots were not kirzovy, but cowhide, officer's boots. The routine at the internship is army style, with a 6:00 rise and combat training without indulgences or simplifications.

And my whistleblowers say: at the age of 11 I entered the Suvorov school! That's corruption! That's the blat!

To make it even more convincing, the whistleblowers should have said: he enrolled at the age of 11, but all the others did at that age.... But for some reason the whistleblowers did not specify.

For if it was reported that the others were 15-16 years old, then it would be unclear: what was I alone among these foreheads doing? Was I taught in a special program or what? And when those foreheads were released and sent to higher military schools, what happened to me? Was I left to repeat the course?

Well, citizens, everyone was admitted at the age of 11. Comrade Stalin established it in 1943. The first company was the youngest. The next year it was assigned the next number in ascending order: the company became the second, a year later - the third, and so on. The sixth company was a pre-graduation company, the seventh was a graduation company. We were enrolled in the first company after the fourth grade at the age of 11. When we were 12 years old, the company became the second, and when 17 - the seventh. When we were 18, we graduated.

The cadet brotherhood lived in an atmosphere of some inner nobility, and I would even say aristocracy. Scoundrels and scoundrels did not survive in that atmosphere. Our cadet groups from St. Petersburg to Ussuriysk were different from all others. One came to school in the morning, then went home. In children's correctional institutions some come for a short term, others for a long term; new friends and enemies appear, old ones leave. And we were pressed into a single family from day one for seven years. And from the first day cadets from the senior companies explained the rules of cadet behavior and persistently imposed them. Snitching and any other abominations were mercilessly punished. A misdemeanor committed in the first year was always remembered. Those who did not fit into the collective, left on their own. Those who could not bear the load were expelled.

There were eight people in my ward on admission.

After the first year they kicked out Zhenka Maslov and added Vanya Sarkhoshyan. After the second year, Volodya Solopov was expelled. After the third Vitya Shilov was transferred to Kiev IED, Sasha Slukin was expelled for health reasons. After the fourth year expelled Kostya Barashkin and Vanya Sarkhoshya-na. After the sixth year - Volodya Lifshits. Two of us made it to graduation - me and Sasha Yurin. Sasha, hi!

We must admit that our case is not standard. But the general picture was as follows: we recruited 75 people to the company, a year later we added 10, and seven years later we graduated 49 people.

In 1963 the Voronezh IED was disbanded. I was transferred to the Kalinin IED, from which I graduated in the summer of 1965.

And again, the whistleblowers are jubilant: it was his blag that got him a job....

Let's puzzle the exposers with a question: if I was transferred to another school by blag, what happened to my comrades?

Let's dispel the fog: in 1960 Nikita Khrushchev hit the army.

It was reduced by one million two hundred thousand people. The reorganization also affected the Suvorov schools. It was decided to reduce the term of training from seven years to three. But if the term is reduced, then in the same barracks and training buildings can be prepared twice as many future officers. Consequently, the number of Suvorov schools could be reduced. In the system of the Ministry of Defense there were 17 of them, it was decided to keep 9. The reorganization was carried out wisely. In 1960 for three years was stopped admission to all Suvorov military schools. Therefore, in the fall of that year in all schools remained six companies. There were no first companies - they were not recruited. Free barracks and training buildings appeared in each school. In the same year was disbanded Saratov SVU. Six of its companies were sent to other schools. At the same time, the companies were not torn apart, established collectives did not break.

The next year, all the Suvorov schools no longer had not only the first but also the second companies. And three schools were disbanded: Orenburg, Tula and Tambov. Our Voronezh SVU received two

companies from Tula. We have no first and second companies, but we have two sixth and two seventh companies.

In 1962 there were no third companies in all colleges. In the same year the Novocherkassk and Stavropol colleges were disbanded.

In 1963 it was our turn. The three remaining companies of Voronezh Suvorovtsy were transferred to Kalinin. In the same year the admission was resumed. But now they were already accepted at the age of 15. We called these guys "Kutuzovites." They were glorious and correct, but from our point of view, something was forever and irretrievably lost in the system of Suvorov schools.

In 1964 the Kuibyshev SVU was disbanded. In the same year, the company numbering system was changed. Now the company number didn't reflect your seniority. It didn't reflect anything - just a number. We, without bending, went from the first to the sixth inclusive, but instead of the most desirable and honorable seventh company suddenly fell into the fourth. Let's imagine that in an ordinary school the tenth grade would suddenly be called the sixth or fifth.

During the period of my training, the head of KLSVU was Major General Kostrov, my company commander was Lieutenant Colonel Prokhozhaev, my platoon commander was Major Toporkov, my company petty officer was petty officer of the superannuated service Alferov, and my deputy platoon commander was senior sergeant Maslov.

Let's assume that I was transferred to the Kalinin SVU by blat, but in order not to be boring, three more companies of my comrades were transferred together with me by the same "blat". And all in all, during the five years of reorganization, 2,410 students were transferred "by blat" from eight disbanded schools to the nine remaining ones.

I don't know if there have ever been bad commanders or bad teachers in Suvorov schools. I've never met any in seven years. But I still have my scarlet cadet epaulettes with the letters "KL SVU" on them to this day.

After the SVU, I entered the second year of the Frunze Kiev Higher Combined Arms Command School, twice Red Banner - it had just been transferred from Odessa to Kiev. The story is like this. There were many military schools in Kiev. Among them - one with a very modest name KKTU - Kiev Command and Technical School. Even the word "military" was not present in the name. But if the school was a command school, it was clear that it was not civilian. Cadets wore tank emblems, commanded by Major-General of Artillery Mukhachev. And officers of the Strategic Missile Forces were trained there to serve in units and formations armed with 8K63, 8K64 and 8K65, i.e. strategic missiles of medium and intercontinental range. Comrade Khrushchev emphasized missiles and deployed a powerful system of training command, engineering and technical personnel, but it soon became clear that the Strategic Missile Forces did not need such a large number of officers. In 1965, the KCTU produced its last graduating class of "tankers" and was closed.

And at that time, the Odessa Higher Combined Arms Command School became cramped within its native walls. It became cramped because, in addition to Soviet officers, it was also training fighters of national liberation movements. Now the whole world is fighting international terrorism. But before fighting international terrorism, it should have been created. So it was created in the Soviet Union through the efforts of various organizations and agencies. The Main Intelligence Directorate of the General Staff (GRU GSH) also had a hand in this important endeavor. The idea was simple: to raise the peoples of Asia, Africa and Latin America to fight against the capitalists, first of all, against the American capitalists. Then this very important issue was taken up seriously by the Americans and the British. The idea was also very simple: to raise Muslims against the Soviet Union.

And they were lifted up - fed, , trained, supplied with weapons and money, transferred to Afghanistan...

Now we are successfully fighting this universal evil with our joint forces. But this contagion began to spread from our country.

At that time, there were seven higher general military command schools. All of them had their own peculiarities, their own bias. The Odessa Military Academy differed from the others in that it was under the tacit control of the GRU. People from the GRU, without drawing attention to themselves, looked at the cadets in order to place some graduates on all floors of military intelligence in the future. Neither the cadets nor low and middle commanders were supposed to know about it. Most of the graduates went on to serve in motorized rifle and tank units and units that had nothing to do with military intelligence.

At the same time, the GRU was training fighters of national liberation movements, or, more simply, terrorists from Asia, Africa and Latin America in the Odessa Military Academy. There was a special faculty for them. By the middle of 60-s these fighters became so many that one faculty was not enough. And the contact of Soviet cadets with their class struggle brothers was undesirable. Therefore it was decided to give the "brothers" the whole school, and to transfer the Soviet cadets somewhere else. Where to? There was a vacant place in Kiev! So the Odessa Higher Combined Arms Command School in the summer of 1965 became the Kiev School, located in the town, which became vacant after the disbanding of the KCTU. The cadets who arrived from Odessa were not at all happy about this turn of fate. They wrote on the walls: "Better Odessa with trippers than Kiev with chestnuts".

At that very moment, in August 1965, I entered the Kiev Military Academy. The training there was serious. I graduated with honors. I liberated Czechoslovakia from the corrosive and pernicious influence of capitalism. On his return I was assigned to the 145th Guards Budapest Order of Suvorov and Bogdan Khmelnitsky training motorized rifle regiment of the 66th Guards Poltava Red Banner Division of the Carpathian Military District. Appointment to the training division was in our time encouragement and promotion. In line units a platoon ceiling was a senior officer, a company ceiling was a captain. In training units platoon ceiling - captain, company ceiling - major. И

official salaries in training units and formations were higher. My regiment was called a motorized rifle regiment, but it trained sergeants for reconnaissance units and units of motorized rifle and tank divisions of the Precarpathian Military District and two groups of troops, Central and Southern, that is, for Soviet troops in Czechoslovakia and Hungary.

The training was, to put it mildly, ferocious. At that time, the main task of reconnaissance units and units in combat was to search for and destroy enemy nuclear weapons and their means of delivery. When reconnaissance units found a nuclear bomb, a rocket battery, or a 203-mm self-propelled howitzer behind enemy lines, they were obliged to report it to headquarters and attack, whatever their chances of success.

Our probable (and unlikely) adversaries understood this, so even in peacetime they took measures to protect and defend especially important facilities. The Soviet Army responded by strengthening its reconnaissance units. Earlier the main striking force of reconnaissance battalions of motorized rifle and tank divisions were floating tanks PT-76. In my time they were replaced by T-55 and T-64.

Service in the training school was no picnic. The training division would turn into a combat division at any moment on alert. There were plenty of such alarms. That's why we all had as if two services at the same time: training of sergeants, and preserving the mobilization readiness of the unit. But that's not all. After the division went on alert, the second set of weapons, military equipment, transportation, ammunition and the so-called "core" (that is, a group of officers) to receive reservists and deployment of the division of the second formation remained in place. During my service, I had to visit both the first formation and the "core".

I quickly became convinced that our native authorities do not pay money for nothing and do not give free military ranks. The service was complicated not least by the shortage of command personnel. The division was constantly taking officers on long overseas assignments - to Cuba, Egypt, Syria, Vietnam and hell knows where else. But there was an order from the Minister of Defense: do not take the positions of those who went on long business trips. Positions remained vacant, but someone had to do the work for the departed. In my battalion, for example, there was no chief of staff - he was fighting in Africa, and they could not send a new one to take his place. Therefore, the commander of the first company temporarily (three years) performed his duties. But if there was no company commander on the spot, the first platoon commander worked for him. And the regiment had no chief of intelligence. For the same reason. So one company commander performed his duties....

The training course for sergeants was six months. The recruits were received by echelons and in six months, having been awarded badges by order of the division commander, were sent to the troops. Passed the exams - a junior sergeant, passed on the
"excellent" - sergeant. Prepared scouts essentially to suicidal actions, but the death of the reconnaissance groups ensured the survival of the main forces.

In the 66th Guards Motorized Rifle Training Division, I made four excellent graduations. The next step on the service ladder was the intelligence department of the Volga Military District Headquarters. Kuibyshev was the secret reserve capital of the Soviet Union. The district headquarters is on the bank of the Volga, and behind it is a grandiose square. They say it is one of the largest in Europe, if not in the world. Under that square, as we all now know, was Comrade Stalin's secret command post, in comparison with which the command posts of Hitler and Churchill look very unsolid and not serious.

Speaking of Churchill. Let's hear how the British pronounce this name. In my opinion, the name sounds
"ë". We forget this letter for nothing, we throw it out of the language for nothing. Our language has been impoverished for the last decades. And this letter has so much softness and tenderness, which our stale souls lack.

And if we are talking about this beautiful letter, let's think about why our good people are always trying to dot the "i's" that don't need to be dotted at all. And why our people do not hurry to dot the "e"? I explain such things except by the properties of the mysterious Russian soul.

But back to the spare capital.

Under Khrushchev and Brezhnev the role of Kuibyshev as a secret reserve capital of the country was preserved. Therefore, the Volga Military District Headquarters secretly carried an additional load - in case of aggravation of the international situation here were deployed reserve command posts of the Supreme Commander-in-Chief and General Staff, as well as a strategic communications center. In the corridor of the Intelligence Department of the Volga Military District Headquarters, fate confronted me with the one whom I mentioned in "Aquarium" in a single line - a ringing girl from the control group.

After a year of service in this headquarters - three years of the Military Diplomatic Academy of the Soviet Army, four years of work in agent extraction and leave.

Whistleblowers look for - and find - inconsistencies in the biographies of Viktor Suvorov and Vladimir Rezun.

You are trying in vain, citizens - there should have been no consistency. If I had given the exact names, places and dates, it would have been mean to my comrades, fellow soldiers and commanders. Therefore, I shifted the narrative by place and time, changed the names. In my books, I worked "downward" quite consciously.

In "Liberator" and "Aquarium" Victor Suvorov is a collective farm chauffeur, who sells watermelons in the marketplace and poisons the Dnieper with poisonous abomination, and Vladimir Rezun was trained from the age of 11 in special military schools.

Viktor Suvorov entered the first year of the Kharkov Guards Tank Command School, and the

Vladimir Rezun - immediately to the second year of the Kiev Higher Combined Armed Forces Command College twice Red Banner Frunze.

Viktor Suvorov served at the headquarters of the Precarpathian Military District, and Vladimir Rezun at the headquarters of the Volga Military District, the secret reserve capital of the Soviet Union.

Viktor Suvorov got into the nomenclature of the Central Committee as a senior lieutenant, and the nimble Rezun - still a lieutenant, breaking all records.

In "Aquarium" I mentioned the ringing girl from the control group with one line, and in Rezun's life the matter did not stop there.

All graduates of the First Faculty of the Military Diplomatic Academy are entitled to at least one more year of training in various departments of the GRU. Victor Suvorov also went through that year, and in real life I was the first of the entire graduating class to go on combat duty abroad, bypassing that year of additional training.

Viktor Suvorov worked in Vienna, the second most important center of world espionage, while Rezun worked in Geneva, the first center, its main capital.

In "Aquarium" I had one Navigator, but in real life there were three residents: two smart, the third not so smart. When this third one died a few years after everything that had happened, no one from the GRU came to bury him, even though he was a major-general. He was hated by everyone - both superiors and subordinates. He earned his striped pants only because his brother was an assistant to Comrade Brezhnev. This smart guy in general's pants grew up in the high offices of Moscow, and his first position abroad, the highest of all possible - the GRU resident in Geneva. He failed everything that could be failed. I did not tarnish my book with his image.

And the real reasons for leaving were never explained.

Viktor Suvorov fled alone and from Austria, Vladimir Rezun fled with his wife and young children and from Switzerland.

My point? Because both "Tales of a Liberator" and "Aquarium" were written and published in the days of comrades Brezhnev and Andropov, when the unbreakable union of free republics was great and mighty, when few believed that soon it would be gone. "Aquarium" - not about me, not about my adventures, but about how military intelligence works from battalion and above, up to the most important residences. And I had two paths.

The first: to call everyone with whom one has had the misfortune to serve, by name, and to break many destinies.

Second: change all the names, starting with his own, shift the action in time and space. I was especially careful when it came to agents. Please note, after I left, there was not a single spy trial. No one was arrested or convicted.

it was a bad job and didn't know anything?

Anyone who does not do well in strategic intelligence is kicked out after the first year. I, on the other hand, served the full term of my assignment, all three years. As an exception, I was retained for the fourth year, and as a special exception - for the fifth.

In order not to inconvenience anyone, I gave myself a false name and decided never to reveal my pseudonym. I was first revealed by the head of the GRU, Colonel General E.L. Timokhin:

"*The pseudonym "Suvorov" was taken by former Major Rezun Vladimir Bogdanovich*" ("Krasnaya Zvezda", April 29, 1992).

And now the critics reproach me: I should have given up everyone I knew! I should have called everyone by their real names, tied the action precisely to place and time, so that it was easy to identify not only those who were near, but also those who were far away!

And it was necessary to disclose the names, passwords and identities! Especially the foreign agents should have been highlighted in detail and brightly, so that they would all be caught and imprisoned!

Thank you for your advice, dear comrades. But in this life, I only follow the path I have chosen for myself. Now

for the main thing.

What's the most important

thing to me? The main thing is

Icebreaker.

In the Soviet Union, the study of the Great Patriotic War was forbidden and persecuted. To sing heartfelt songs about the war - you are welcome. It's no expense to make an ugly baba in Stalingrad. And the fact that the concrete will crack in a couple of decades and the statue on the man-made mound will inevitably tilt and sag - no one cared. Let's budget now, and let future generations solve the problems. : our native state erected cyclopean idols on the mounds, spared no expense in order to

patriotism to stimulate patriotism (and to cut the budget), but the access to the archives of the war years was intentionally closed. This is what attracted my attention. The war seems to be the Great War, it seems to be the Patriotic War, but it is not recommended to go into details. They're hiding something there. I wonder what it is?

I'm sitting in the academy at a lecture, and a seasoned wolf of agent extraction is explaining to me what signs a scout should look for in order to determine whether the enemy is preparing an attack or not. Among these signs: the enemy pulls up to the border headquarters and command posts, communication centers and strategic reserves of fuel, ammunition and engineering equipment, deploys an airfield network ... And the next lecture another colonel reads about our blatant stupidity in 1941: Stalin's generals and marshals, who did not think anything of it, pulled up to the border headquarters and command posts, communication centers and strategic reserves of fuel, ammunition and engineering equipment, deployed an airfield network. At the same time they built 254 airfields in the western regions of the country! Yes, with concrete strips! They brought there fuel, food, bombs, dug dugouts, put up tents, the Germans came to everything ready-made: tons of potatoes in warehouses, cabbage in barrels, bandages in the sanitary unit, even Soviet bombs were useful to the Germans, the airplane doesn't care what bombs they hang under it. If there had not been these airfields, German pilots would not have had so much fun in our skies, especially in the bad weather.

And we all laughed at the stupidity of Comrade Stalin and his generals. The whole world is still laughing at us. There's no need to laugh. Those airfields were prepared not for Hitler and his aces, but for a surprise strike against Hitler. And there's nothing wrong with that.

It's Hitler!

You don't have to have seven eyes in your head to realize that Stalin was preparing an attack. And having understood this, we can take any aspect of the country's preparation for war, and we will see with the naked eye evidence of this simple assumption. Here were in peacetime prepared partisan detachments - they were dispersed just before the war. Why? Because they were preparing to fight on foreign territory. They prepared an incredible number of parachutists, which are not needed in a defensive war. Why? The same reason.

I have not considered many questions in my books - the subject is inexhaustible. But take any incomprehensible question, and "Icebreaker", like a golden key, will reveal the answer to you.

And they say to me: in real science they do not act like that - they collect facts, analyze them, and then make conclusions. And you have it the other way around: first you make a conclusion, and then you crack any facts like peanuts with this conclusion. This is not a scientific approach!

It's really not a scientific approach. It's a reconnaissance approach - to pick out some small oddity, some trifle. There's a broken twig on the path. Why would it be broken? Find an explanation for this strange fact, and then everything else will become clear. By the way, it's not just intelligence that works like this. Have you read the Sherlock Holmes books? Here! This very Holmes also paid attention to some strange grains, blades of grass and spots, found logic in things seemingly illogical, and then all other facts became understandable.

A military intelligence analyst works like an investigator. No one will reveal the logic of events to him. That's what his job is, to find that logic. And no one will open a safe in front of an intelligence officer. By the way, and in front of a historian, too. That's why historian and scout are related professions. Their task is to penetrate into the vaults of secrets. And if it is not possible to get access to those papers, then it remains only to calculate the secrets that are hidden in safes and vaults. Understanding the secrets of history - is the exploration of the past. And the historian needs no less courage. He risks his life, as well as a scout: the head can be torn off. Or something else.

I started writing "Icebreaker" the first night after I left. I thought I would be able to fit it into one article. I wrote it, but realized that to understand it I needed to write two more explanatory articles, and to understand them - four more. The articles multiplied, turning into chapters, but I had to live on something. Without stopping work on the main theme, I had to put another one in the foreground. In a few months I wrote "Stories of a Liberator". For this purpose it was not necessary to make card catalogs, to collect anew information about divisions and corps, about generals and marshals, to reread the books of adolescence and youth.

"Tales of a liberator" - about how I was a cadet, how I sat in the brig, how to clean the general's latrines, how I became an officer, how to liberate a brotherly country, which was trying to turn from the right path.

Finding a literary agent, a publisher, a translator, checking the translation, editing - all this takes time, patience and nerves. The book didn't come out until 1981. The publisher insisted that it be published under my real name.

In this case, the book is guaranteed to become a bestseller. There were all the conditions for that: Soviet diplomat Vladimir Rezun disappeared in neutral Switzerland with his wife and two children.

A diplomat is not a private person, but an official representative of his country. The disappearance of a diplomat of any rank is a sensation. The Cold War is in full swing. The two superpowers confront each other all over the world, from Cuba and Chile to Egypt and Syria, from Indonesia and Vietnam to Czechoslovakia and Germany. At any moment there could be an escalation with an unpredictable outcome for all mankind. It has happened many times before. And negotiations on nuclear charges and means of their delivery, on submarines and missile defense, on tanks and guns are taking place in Geneva, within the walls of the Permanent Mission of the USSR to the UN.

And now, not just a diplomat from some embassy, but a diplomat from this very Permanent Embassy is missing

of the representation of the USSR.

And the FBI announces that the fugitive diplomat has been granted asylum in the UK. Radio, television, and the press are eager and ready: here are the front pages of newspapers, here are magazine covers for photos, here is airtime in news reports. But the fugitive is silent. In the press - the most incredible versions of what happened. Everyone is looking for an explanation why there are no public appearances with denunciations and exposures. There are suggestions that diplomacy for Rezun was only a cover for some secret activity. This is even more interesting.

There was even a timid version in the press: is he not from the GRU?

There are many defectors from the KGB. And from the GRU, the last time a man escaped 32 years ago, in 1946. There was also Colonel Penkovsky from the GRU. But he didn't escape. If this one is from the GRU. Publishers are contacting the F.O.C.
- here are the contracts, ready to buy the book if he decides to write it. We pay now, we pay abundantly, it does not matter what will be in that book, the main thing - soon, and to have the author's name on the cover: Vladimir Rezun!

But I never appeared on the screens or the front pages of the newspapers. Never. Vladimir Rezun was gone forever. I decided to break into literature not on the crest of a cheap sensation, but, so to speak, "on general grounds", and to find my way to the reader not by the name on the cover, but by the content of my books. That's why I started from scratch: here is a book by an author whom nobody knows. It was not easy to get through. After many attempts, I finally found a publisher who decided to publish a book by an unknown author about the Soviet Army. And one day he asked me: Are you, by any chance, Rezun? And when he found out that I was, he rejoiced: we are now under our real name! We will present a bestseller to the world! But I didn't want to cause trouble to anyone, so I firmly decided - only under a pseudonym. But if so, the advance would be meager, circulation would be as it turned out, and there would be no guarantees of success.

I stood my ground: only under a pseudonym. Then the question arose: under what name? The publisher said: it should be something Russian, preferably in three syllables and that it was somehow connected with the army, but that the reader did not know how it was connected. I've heard something somewhere, but I'm not sure.

I said: Kalashnikov! He said, "No, we know that one. And there are four syllables. Make it shorter. I told him: Suvorov. And who's that? - He asks. There was one, I answer.

That's what we agreed. I thought I would make a joke once, and then come up with something serious. My opuses would never reach the Soviet Union anyway, and here, in Britain, they know no more about Suvorov than they do about the brilliant general Vicomte de Turenne, Marshal of France.

And one wise expositor told me: write under your own name or under a pseudonym, the royalties are the same! That's the proof: you don't write books by yourself!

My dear man, I chose a pseudonym only for the first book, the one about the Kiev . Valera Simonov, my good buddy at the Kiev Higher Combined Arms Command School, and later head of Army Intelligence, wrote this: "*Personally, reading the book "The Liberator", I was amazed at the accuracy with which the author portrayed the Kiev garrison brig. I will not hide, I myself had to serve a total of fifty-plus days there.*" ("Moskovskaya Pravda", July 31, 1994).

But if we believe not my friend, who served time there much more than I did, but the whistleblower, it turns out that a Russian person (with Ukrainian roots) who has been there and gone through it is not able to tell about his impressions, and only the wise British, who were not there, who did not clean the general's latrines, were able to describe it all for me. It is no other way to say that the accuracy of the narrative was achieved not by me, but by the omnipresent British intelligence that penetrated those latrines.

And the name on the cover, citizen whistleblower, is not the last thing. If you write under your own name, the royalties are one thing; under a pseudonym, quite another. Only someone who has never dealt with the publishing world can fail to understand this. So: the author's name (real or pseudonym) is often more important than the content.

In my case, the situation looked simple.

There was a great superpower in the world called the Soviet Union. The leaders of the superpower taught everyone how to live, imposing their order by tanks, but in their own country they could not provide the population with clothes and shoes.

The superpower flooded the world for free with T-54 tanks, Vladimirov machine guns and Kalashnikov assault rifles, S-75 missiles and RPG-7 grenade launchers, but was unable to feed itself.

The superpower helped everyone from Angola and Ethiopia to Mozambique and Libya. But this superpower was unable to build housing for its officers.

The superpower was the first to pave the way to space, but it could not provide its schools with warm toilets and maternity hospitals with hot water.

For the sake of communism's victory in Cuba, the superpower almost plunged the world into a nuclear catastrophe.

The superpower kept its breadwinners in collective farms, not giving them internal passports to keep them from scattering, and fought hard for the freedom of the oppressed peoples of Asia and Africa.

The superpower did not pay its men any money, and even if it started to pay them later, it was impossible to buy anything with that money. And the same superpower exported hundreds of tons of gold to America every year in exchange for grain: let the American farmer be rich and happy, let him buy a house, a car and a tractor.

The superpower waged a mortal struggle against capitalism, declaring to the whole world with the mouth of its leader: we will bury you!

But if the superpower buries the damned capitalists, who will feed it?

Well, an officer escaped from the General Staff of this superpower. And wrote a book about the Soviet Army. Imagine that the publisher announces: here is his real name, here is a photo, here is a biography. In this case, interest is assured. The success of a book in those years, in that environment, depended only on the name on the cover.

Here's another situation. The same book about the Soviet Army is published. But the only thing we know about the author is that his name is, for example, Alexander Sergeevich Macedonsky. Both readers and critics will understandably be distrustful of such a book. And it is impossible to guarantee success in this case. That is why the advance is thin.

I wanted the book to be judged not by the name on the cover, but by the

content. And it was. And it became a bestseller.

After that, the situation was reversed.

Now the reader wants new books with that strange name on the cover. Offer the publisher to write under another pseudonym or even his real name, and he no longer accepts.

While The Liberator was being translated, while it was being prepared for publication - a long and arduous task - I wrote a second book. I invented a new pseudonym, but the publisher cut me off: "Too late, brother, you are now famous under the pseudonym Suvorov.

The second book was called "The Soviet Army: Problems and Solutions". The publisher rejected the title. The book came out under the title Inside the Soviet Army. The book was about the simplest things: the advantages of the boot over the shoe, why Soviet battalions are not always commanded by lieutenant colonels, but by majors and even captains. I explained the most elementary things.

We were laughed at back then. The Russians have a caliber of 76 mm. They had anti-aircraft, ship, tank, regimental and divisional guns of this caliber. And they, silly, invented a new caliber for the SPG-9 for some reason
- 73 mm. They have a caliber of 122 mm - this is a howitzer, a tank gun, a self-propelled gun based on the IS-2, and a corps gun. But for some reason they create a self-propelled howitzer of the same caliber of 122 mm, and for tanks they invented a new caliber - 125 mm! Where is standardization? Where is the logic? Stupidity, that's all. And the laughter echoed on both sides of the Atlantic.

I explained in the book using this and other examples: no, gentlemen, everything here is correct, everything is logical. It is your mother who has bad children. It is necessary to think: in West Germany there is a 120 mm mortar and a 120 mm tank gun. But shells of the tank gun don't fit the mortar. So why do you need such standardization? It only creates confusion. You need to order ammunition of such and such caliber in battle, and then yell into the telephone, what exactly is meant.

This book was written for people in the military, proving the only idea: don't consider us fools, we are not more foolish than you, gentlemen. For some reason, this book began to be bought not only by military men, but also by students, pensioners, schoolchildren, housewives. The book became not just a bestseller, but the "book of the month" in the United States. It allowed me to pay off all my debts in one fell swoop and buy a house with a marble fireplace. Now it was possible all my life to do nothing at all or do only what I like. And I like to write books. After that, there was "Aquarium," "Control," there were other books.

In 1985 I finished "Icebreaker". There are many publishers here, but it was not possible to publish the book. I put a few fragments in the newspaper "Russian Thought", in the magazine "Continent" and in the journal of the Royal United Services Institute for Defense and Security Studies. He persistently searched for a publisher. In the meantime, he continued to work on the book. I added new chapters and rewrote old ones. The book was first published in German in 1989 and in English in 1990. Icebreaker" was never published in Russian abroad. Some people took it, and then said that it would be necessary to change the style. It was not scientific.

I told them: I don't need science. Who do we write books for? That's right - for the people. So let's write in the language that is understandable and close to our people. It doesn't take intelligence to write in scientific language. Any academician can write in scientific language. But you try to write in such a way that schoolchildren, housewives, soldiers, officers, woodcutters, and musicians would find it interesting.

Quite deliberately I did not prove my theory on the academic field, did not argue with our highbrow and wise. I wrote in such a way that my thought reached the broad masses of people, and let them ask questions and demand an answer.

Meanwhile, the so-called "glasnost" was raging in the Soviet Union, under the guise of which archival documents were being destroyed by the ton. The magazine Neva published "Aquarium" and approached me: "Give me something else! I told them: "You won't publish it. And they said: come on, we have freedom of speech. I gave them "Icebreaker" and there was silence. I called them a month later: How was it? They say it's great, but there's no date by which

the publication could be timed. As the months passed, the date approached: the fiftieth anniversary of the beginning of the Great Patriotic War! I called: well, how is it? You see, they say, we can't offend veterans on such a date.

After that, everything froze again. The reason is the same: there is no date to which it can be timed. And if it was just published, who would read it? So no one decided to do it, even after the Soviet Union collapsed.

Sergey Leonidovich Dubov took up the task of publishing "Icebreaker". He had doubts: what should be the circulation? He was a cautious man, did not like to take risks, so at first he made a timid approach - only 320 thousand. Then he realized that it was not enough, and while the trial run was being printed, he added the first million.

And I have a whole bunch of other books. Until I started writing "Icebreaker", I thought I could do with one big article. Many years later, it turned out that one book was not enough. In order to explain some points in "Icebreaker", I had to write "M-Day" and "The Last Republic", and "The Last Republic" in turn stretched into three books.

I had to develop parallel themes that arose in the course of the case. I was told that Russians could not have planned such a thing, they were not ready for war. I decided to respond to this with a powerful article: look at Hitler! On his army, on his readiness for war. The article, as soon as I sat down to write it, immediately grew into a book "Suicide": the stupidity in Hitler's state and in the army was no less than in ours. Having written the book, I realized that the topic was only briefly touched upon. I will return to it in time.

Critics do not stop: Stalin could not prepare an attack, he himself beheaded his own army. He decided to respond with a powerful article, which resulted in the book "Purification": look at Tukhachevsky and others like him "geniuses." And this topic turned out to be bottomless. I've only opened it up. Maybe I'll come back to it. There is no time for everything, another problem overshadowed the horizon: we had such a brilliant military leader named Zhukov, so talented .... I had to respond to this with an article, which required two explanatory articles, which required.... As a result, now I have about Zhukov only two books - "The Shadow of Victory" and "I take back my words. But I will definitely get to him again one day.

For a quarter of a century now, "Icebreaker" has been refuted with a seemingly teeth-grinding argument: one man could not have written such a thing, a group of experts from British intelligence worked here.

The technique is old. It has been around for many hundreds of years. When the guys from the Holy Inquisition - the very ones with cold hearts and hot heads - had nothing to say, they declared: it was not you who wrote it, it was the Devil who guided your hand! That's all.

And try to prove that it is not so. This is a good move, because it allows you to avoid discussing the substance of the question at once: it is a creation of the Devil, what else is there to argue about?

So, using the argument about British intelligence is a cowardly act and an attempt to avoid discussing really important issues. I have been demanding for thirty years now: put a group of experts against me, let's fight under TV cameras, and the people will judge.

But neither the Minister of Defense, nor the Chief of the General Staff, nor the President of the Academy of Sciences, nor the higher leaders have yet responded to this call. And they never will. Because their point of view is not logical and deeply immoral. They defend two mutually exclusive postulates.

One: The Red Army saved Europe from Nazism.

Second: The Soviet Union was a staunch ally of Hitler, would never attack Germany, would never liberate anyone, and never intended to.

Why is this done? Why do the leaders and their ideological servants prove the unprovable with fury? Yes, because it is necessary to plunder the remnants of the country's former power and wealth, but it is not easy to steal from intelligent people.
Therefore, they must be fooled. And here is the result: tens of millions of people amicably repeat: the Soviet Union liberated Europe from the brown plague, but it did not want to liberate Europe, and was not capable of doing so, because it was not ready for war.

Friendship and cooperation with Hitler, complicity in his crimes, supply of strategic raw materials, without which the war and the conquest of Europe were impossible - this is our national shame. I broke my fate, broke the fate of my family, friends, relatives in order to prove to the country and the world: the alliance with Hitler was a tactical device, a diversionary maneuver. And Stalin's strategic plan - the defeat of Germany and the liberation of Europe from the brown plague. To be Hitler's friend is a shame and an abomination. To attack Hitler is a holy thing. Declaring this, I save the honor of my country, people and army. That's what all my books are about.

Writing a book for someone is easy. But writing a good book for someone else is impossible.

Since my early youth, when I was composing the story of the mechanical cat, I tried to solve the riddle: what is a good book? What requirements should it fulfill?

I've been thinking, thinking, thinking for a long time, and this is what I've come to.

Let me share: in my opinion, a good book should fulfill only one requirement - it should be interesting.

They will say: How could it be so! It should also be wise, intelligent, informative, cognitive, inviting, mobilizing, inspiring, soulful. They will give us a lot of different requirements.

Let us object to the objections: if a book is interesting, doesn't that say it all? Doesn't it immediately exhaust all possible characteristics? Isn't it necessary to add something to it?

Let's be reasonable. If a book is interesting, can it also be stupid? If it's interesting, can it also be stupid? Meaningless? Empty? Soulless?

An interesting book is always both clever and interpretive, informative and heartwarming.

But how do you make it so? They say you have to put a piece of your soul into your creation.

No, citizens! Don't be fooled! A piece is not enough!

Don't be stingy! Don't be stingy! Don't be greedy! Don't be stingy! Put it all in! All of it! All of it! What about

afterwards? If you put all your heart into it, what will you be left with?

Calm down, skeptics, cynics and pessimists. She's immortal. Put your soul into your creation, it will not cost you anything. On the contrary, your soul will become higher, wider, deeper and purer.

I wonder what's easier: writing an interesting book or making an interesting movie?

There can't be two opinions. To make an interesting movie, you need to invest your soul and money. But for a book, only the soul is enough. Let's agree: a bubble of ink, a goose-tail quill and a papyrus - not such a big expense. By and large, it is only the soul that is invested.

That's it?

That's it.

But it's not that simple either. Not everyone can bare their soul and put it out there. Not everyone has one. Some, perhaps, would like to put it out, but cannot because of its complete absence. That is why you do not meet a good book every day. That is why it is impossible to write a good book for someone else. You can't squeeze your soul into someone else's cover.

And when my opponents run out of arguments, they start making up dirty and vile false stories about me. It was frustrating. But fate has sent a call girl from the control group to be my life friend. People sometimes ask her: you have such a beautiful accent, you must be Swedish? Yes," she replies, "a Swede, from near Poltava. This wise woman, with whom we recently celebrated our Ruby wedding, once calmed me down: let them talk! Let them talk louder! Let them yell and scream and ! It's an indication that they have nothing to say. It's a confession.

Viktor Suvorov aka Vladimir Rezun

August 21, 2011

Notes

1

Technically, this is the content of the book *(from the author of the e-version)*

2

Expect the unexpected.

3

Felix Chuev "Molotov. Semi-powerful ruler". Moscow, "Olma Press", 1999, pp. 458.

4

Yes, that' right, although the song says the opposite.

5

Article 64 of the 1960 RSFSR Criminal Code, "Treason against the Motherland," established the death penalty with confiscation of property as the most severe punishment.

6

Foreign Office - the Foreign Office of the United Kingdom.

7

That's how it is in the original - *(from the author of the electronic version).*